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MARCH 1995 ISSUE 37

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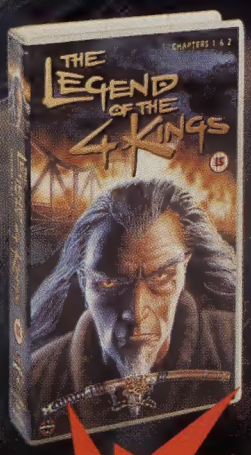

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COMIC WORLD

MARCH 1995 ISSUE 37

Cover: While we celebrate our third year, Judge Dredd celebrates 18 years as Mega-City One's toughest Judge. The one man judge, jury and executioner image has changed over the years, and he's about to change even more, as you'll see in our exclusive Dredd features beginning on page 34. Judge Dredd is © Fleetway Editions Ltd. Cover art by Jason Brashill, recently voted the Megazine's top cover artist.

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Comic World UP-FRONT

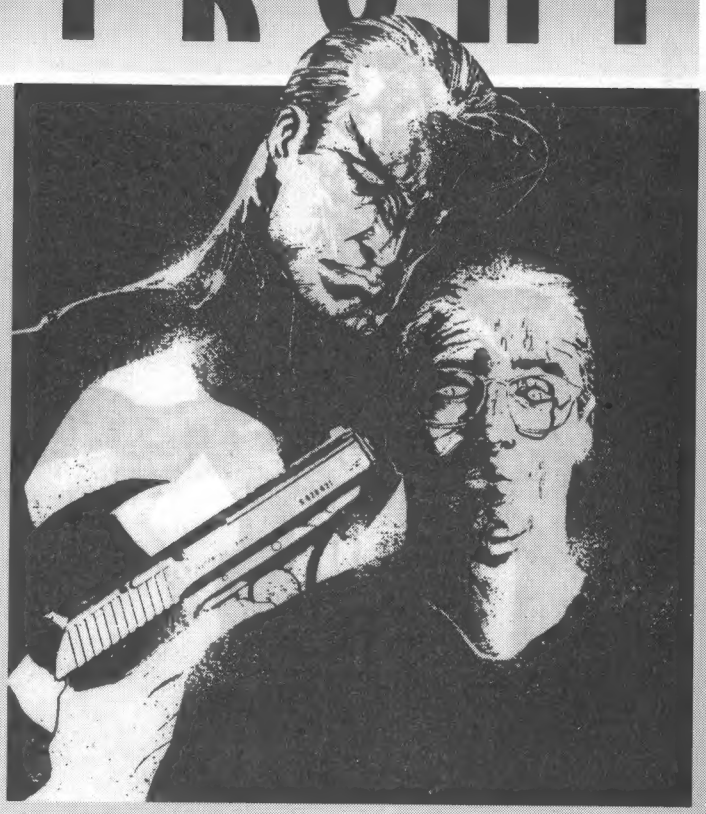
It looks like the 100th Anniversary of the American comics' industry are going to be overshadowed by a variety of plans the industry has for 1995. The origins of the industry are generally dated from the first appearance of 'The Yellow Kid' on February 17, 1895, a bald slum kid, one of a group hanging around Hogan's Alley in Richard F. Oulton's New York World gag panels. The waif became more prominent over the months, very noticeable because of the yellow nightshirt he wore. Messages on the Kid's shirt meant that - although he never spoke - he could communicate with the world.

100 years later the comics industry communicates with fans through the Direct Market, and 1995 is going to see more changes than any other year; the mighty Marvel Entertainment empire has just bought itself a distribution network, and immediately jumped from mail-order firm (offering subscriptions) to holding a 7% share in the distribution market. That figure will swing dramatically upwards if Marvel follow through and begin exclusively handling their own titles to the exclusion of the traditional market leaders, Diamond and Capital. With the latter tightening their rules to protect retailers and customers from late shipping and incorrect information in solicitations, Marvel effectively become a favoured nation within its own network, able to offer better terms for Marvel product and take a profit from other company's sales.

Where this leaves the UK, with 95% of all direct market product supplied by Diamond or Capital, only time will tell. We know Marvel's comics will be given the shake up of their lives this summer; let's hope that the UK, a mere 7% of the direct market, features in their future plans.

Captain Marvel competition winners from #34 were K. Beatson, D. Morgan, R. Dann, G.T. Fisher, Koon Sing-To, and Steven Geburtig. Congratulations to them, and commiserations to everyone else. But check out this months competitions because it might just be your lucky day. See you back here in 28 days where we'll be celebrating Superman's 100th issue (and the death of Clark Kent, and Emma's birthday on March 21) with a Superman cover and feature.

Steve



MARVEL RATIONALISATION ENDS JOBS AND TITLES

Marvel's 'Marvelution' programme has claimed a number of casualties as Marvel begin to refocus their efforts and eliminate less profitable lines in 1995. Between 14 and 20 books are to be cancelled; although specific titles were not given in Marvel's January 9 announcement, most of the titles listed in *Comic World* #35 will be on the hit list.

Marvel's President and COO, Terry Stewart, said of the announcement: "The end result is an even stronger group of high-quality Marvel titles, based on proven characters that have demonstrated their ability to generate sales and fan appeal in both up and down markets. For almost a year, retailers have been complaining that the availability of too much product is jeopardising their business. We're trying to act upon their concerns as best we can by cutting specific titles in spite of the fact that they have remained profitable for us. In this way, we hop that we will make it easier for retailers to order Marvel comics, easier for fans to find and buy them, and easier for us to increase our commitments to top talent and promising up-and-comers.

"We know there will be some negative industry reaction to this," Stewart added. "Unfortunately, reducing slower titles means we'll be reducing some positions in editorial and related departments and we'll be changing some freelance assignments. We also appreciate that fans don't like to see their personal favourites cancelled. When possible, we'll fold cancelled characters and story lines into better-selling related titles or provide definitive endings."

A number of editorial staff have found themselves in "reduced positions", include two who had previously heard that they were likely to be made redundant, Craig Anderson and Richard Ashford. Other known redundancies include Don Daly, editor of the *Punisher* line, which seems to confirm that Frank Castle will have his line of titles folded down into one, Evan Skolnik of *Ghost Rider* and *Dr. Strange*, Tim Touhy, Matt Morra, Mindy Newall, Mike Kraiger, Spencer Lam, Freddy Mendez and Mike Rockwitz. We can almost certainly expect changes in creative line-ups to be announced shortly. Speaking from New York, Richard Ashford told *Comic World*: "Everybody was told it was nothing to do with their work - the market at the moment is contracting and Marvel are contracting as well."

One of the titles added to the casualty list is January's Captain America promotion somewhat wilted when the *Marvel Spotlight* issues (a weekly series of 4 reprints) was cancelled at the last minute due to poor sales.

On December 28 Marvel confirmed that they had purchased Superhero Enterprises Inc., based in Randolph, NJ, who operate as Heroes World Distribution Inc., the third largest distributor in the USA. Marvel did not announce the terms of acquisition, but did note that their latest purchase did *not* include the five retail stores owned by Superhero Enterprises. In a statement made shortly after, Diamond Distributors' Chuck Parker said, "It's premature for us

Fleetway Announce 'Young' Dredd Title

After months of speculation, Fleetway Editions have revealed plans for a younger-reader Judge Dredd title. Aimed predominantly at the seven to ten year range, the all-new stories will be free of any violence (or 'heroic bloodshed' in the new parlance of film) that has been a feature of Dredd's 18 year run in 2000AD and his five years starring in the *Judge Dredd Megazine*.

After toying with various titles: *Judge Dredd Adventures, Young Judge Dredd, Junior Judge Dredd, Judge Dredd Action*, the final choice of title is almost certainly to be...

"*Judge Dredd*," reveals *Megazine* editor, David Bishop. "Nothing else. *Judge Dredd* and a long pause worthy of Pinter. It'll be the adjectiveless *Judge Dredd* but it'll be called *Young Dredd* in the office just to help us. We've had a very long argument: What do you call a comic about Judge Dredd, especially when there's a film called *Judge Dredd* coming out; in the end you just think, 'Let's just call it *Judge Dredd* and have done with it. Yes, there's a big danger of confusing everybody, but once they see it I think they *will* notice the difference.

"It's aimed at seven to twelve-year-olds, but predominantly seven to ten, and to a degree it's the famous missing link comic that everybody's always wanted to publish and never got around to doing. This is our best opportunity of zillions of pounds of free publicity on which to launch a comic. The provisional launch date is a week before the film comes out, with, provisionally, me as the editor. You'll notice that much of this is provisional.

"Provisionally it'll be 32 pages with 24 pages of strip, all new material, no reprints. Not provisionally. There will be no reprints in it, simply because when we put together a 32-page dummy which we market researched in this country and Germany, we could not find a single story that could not be considered violent. There was nothing we could run, nothing that captured the essence of Dredd that did not have an exit wound in it. What we reprinted in the end had to have blood painted out, exit wounds taken out; it was real trouble. So we couldn't use reprints if we wanted to.

"A question which we've yet to resolve is: what costume will he be wearing in the comic? The movie costume? The classic costume? A hybrid of the two? I would *like* to use the movie costume because it would distinguish the new title very clearly from all other Dredd material except the movie adaptation," which, incidentally, is to be published by DC with art by Carlos Ezquerra.

"The other thing is that this comic is going to have nothing to do with Dredd continuity as we know it. This is not for continuity purists. In fact it's not for anybody over the age of 14. He's going to be the hero of the comic, not the anti-hero. Three words describe this comic: action not violence. We've been hammering this point to writers for over a year now. The new title's been in development for over a year and a half, and was actually inspired by the *Batman Adventures* animated TV show; we were sitting around in the office, and someone said 'Wouldn't it be great if somebody did a Dredd thing like that: classy, stylish, and yet appealing to a broad age range, and which adults can enjoy.' And we said 'Why can't we?'

"It wandered around as an idea for months and months and months, and we were asked to do a dummy. When the film became a reality things started to accelerate and the head of the juvenile sector at Egmont said that all other territories should reconsider this project as a trans-national project. I know people have tried and failed with Dredd across Europe in the past, but that's because it's been so violent. And also it was like 'Why should we read this? What's the hook for this?' You take the violence out of Dredd and to a degree you haven't got an awful lot to play with with our material that we've published here and in *2000AD*.

"But with the film coming it was obvious that now was an opportunity to do a younger, less violent version of Dredd, so that's what we're doing. We actually commissioned scripts for something that was going to be a traditional anthology, but the title has mutated since then. At the moment we haven't commissioned a word of script, and as I speak we haven't a line of artwork drawn for the simple reason that we don't know what costume he's going to wear. We're trying to resolve that with the makers of the film at the moment, so that we can use the film costume without hassle or the need for approvals or large sums of dosh.

"So that's how it is at the moment. It'll be good, Dredd action filled stories, it'll have all the hallmarks of classic Dredd material, but it won't have exit wounds, we'll probably have no 'shoot to kill' policy...it's weird.

"It's a chance to do a pure comic almost, a return to the Golden Age. Tell a story without having exit wounds, bits flying everywhere, knives gouging out eyeballs and all the other things that we tend to not bat an eyelid at if you're in the comics community - people with giant claws slicing each other up - but if you're a non-comics reader and you pick up a copy of X-Men or Judge Dredd you'd think 'This is so violent.' I mean, equally we don't want it to be so anodyne...I think we can do better than that. Good action without vast numbers of beatings and a huge body count."

With the movie due out on July 21, *Judge Dredd* is provisionally scheduled to be launched on July 14.

to fully understand what, exactly, this will mean to the Direct Market. At this time we are carrying - and expect to continue carrying - Marvel product."

Marvel announced their third quarter turnover for 1994 was up by 37% over the same period in 1993, with net revenue up from $104.7m to $152.1m. The figures settle slightly if the full first nine months of the year are taken into account, but the net revenue figure is still up 17% over 1993. Comics, however, are still taking something of a back seat, the report saying that consumer products, licensing, advertising and promotion programs, and toys is offsetting "softness in the company's comic book and sports card business." Comics now account for only 20% of Marvel's business.

GLASGOW '95 LINE-UP

G - R - O - W - I - N - G

This year's Glasgow Comic Art Convention is set for the weekend of March 18-19 at Clyde Hall, Clyde Street. Confirmed guests include Mike & Laura Allred and James Hudnall from the USA, Sean Phillips, Mark Buckingham, Bryan Talbot, Dean Ormston, Colin MacNeil, Frank Quitely, Glenn Fabry, Grant Morrison, Mark Millar, Garth Ennis, John McCrea, Robbie Morrison, Steve Yeowell, David Lloyd, Peter Hogan, Charlie Adlard, Gordon Rennie and Paul Grist; many more British creators will be in attendance as will editors in search of new talent, so bring your portfolios.

This year's auction will attempt to put graphic novels into every library in Glasgow - "It's an idea we thought worth trying," says organiser, Frank Plowright. "We might be able to put half a dozen books in each library and they may generate new fans for the shops and new fans for comics; it's at least worth a try." Also announced over the weekend will be the UK Comic Art Awards, voted for by professionals in the UK.

Comic World will be there, and we hope you will too. Cost for a single day will be £7.50, or £10.00 for the full weekend. The deadline for advance bookings is March 3. For further information send an SAE to Rusty Staples, PO Box 146, Glasgow G1 5RN.

In The WORKS

Acclaim Comics

Previously known as Voyager, but still continuing to publish under the Valiant imprint, April's lead title will be the launch of a 3-part *Turok, Dinosaur Hunter/ Shaman's Tears* crossover by writer/penciller Mike Grell and inker S. Clarke Hawbacker. The two heroes join forces to battle the mysterious White Buffalo Warriors.

Grell is also the creator behind the *Bloodshot Yearbook 1995*, in which Bloodshot becomes involved in the lives of a South American village...The origin of the Immortal Brothers is revealed in *Timewalker #0*

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by Bob Hall, Don Perlin & Gonzalo Mayo, the true story behind Timewalker, Armstrong and the Eternal Warrior...Andy Smith debuts on the pencils of *X-O Manowar #46*, and Ron Marz's 4-issue story arc concludes in the second bi-weekly issue of April...*Bart Sears' X-O Manowar* reprints all of Sears' work on the title to date, including covers and sketches, in hardcover for $17.95...*Magnus Robot Fighter #51* is

the first in a 4-issue storyline, 'Return of the Robots'...Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning join penciller Mike Manley for the 3-part 'Breaking the Web' beginning in *Ninjak #19*...Debra Doyle and James Macdonald team-up to write the two-part 'The Last God of Dura-Europus' in *Timewalker #10-11*...

Comico

Yes, Comico. After two years absence, they're about to return to the stands. "I realised that almost overnight, the fun had disappeared from comics," says Publisher Andrew Rev of Comico's disappearance. "Foil and other cover enhancements, though financially successful, didn't hide the fact that the basic product was dull." With that challenge in mind, Rev has assembled a number of top creators to aid Comico's relaunch in 1995, beginning with a new *Elementals* series written by Bill Willingham and drawn by Tony (*X-Force*) Daniels, a special Elementals project featuring art by Tony (*Star Wars*) Akins and Alex (*Marvels*) Ross; *Oblivion*, a six-issue mini-series by Jack Herman & Andy Dimitt (with contributions by Art Adams, Geof Darrow, Dave Gibbons and Buzz), and other projects by Simon Bisley, Dave Devries, Scott Clark and Tony Akins.

Dark Horse

From April, Dark Horse will be reworking their *Comics' Greatest World* line into five ongoing monthlies under the banner *Dark Horse Heroes: X, Agents of Law, Ghost, Barb Wire* and *Motorhead*. Dark Horse's Group Editor, Michael Eury explained: "Gone is a line dictated by a shared universe, where continuity and crossovers rule. The thrust of the Dark Horse Heroes books will be upon the characters, their personalities, and their creative teams." First title affected will be *Agents of Change* which becomes the aforementioned Agents of Law in March, followed by an ongoing Ghost monthly in April.

News from Legend: Frank Miller & Geoff Darrow's 'The Big Guy' will make his debut in *Madman Comics #6-7* shipping in March and May. The first issue of *The Big Guy* and *Rusty the Boy Robot* will follow in the summer. Meanwhile, Hellboy and Monkeyman & O'Brien will be supporting characters in John Byrne's *Babe 2* 2-issue mini-series. Byrne's *Danger Unlimited* collection adds a single new page which completely alters the ending.

The big release for March is the ongoing *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor #1* with John Byrne adapting one of Ellison's all-time classics 'I Have No Mouth, And I Must Scream', Diane Schultz & Teddy Kristiansen adapt 'Knox' and 'Turnpike' is reworked by Max Allan Collins & Craig Elliot. Ellison himself provides the framing sequence.

Mike Baron & Steve Rude return with a new series of *Nexus. Wages of Sin* is a 4-part series, 4 original stories beginning with 'The Client' which makes a handy jumping on point for new readers.

March also sees the release of *Colors in Black #1* a 4-issue series from Spike Lee's line, with sixteen black creators providing original stories and adaptations... The two biggest DHC franchises battle it out once again in *Aliens vs Predator:*

Agents of Law

Duel #1 written by Randy Stradley with art by Javier Saltares & Jimmy Palmiotti, a 2-part clash on a supposedly abandoned world...meanwhile, the Predators solo in *Predator: Jungle Tales* collecting two stories from *Dark Horse Comics*: 'Rite of Passage' by Ian Edginton, Rick Leonardi & Dan Panosian and 'The Pride at Nghasa' by Chuck Dixon & Enrique Alcatena...Another franchise title, *Star Wars: The Vandelhelm Mission* reprints a classic story by Archie Goodwin & Al Williamson which follows the events of *Return of the Jedi*...and *Jabba the Hut* stars in his own one-shot thanks to Jim Woodring & Art Wetherell

Dark Horse's annual manga month gets underway with the release of *Domu: A Child's Dream #1* (of 3), the brilliant psychic war story by Katsuhiro (Akira) Otomo set in a Japanese apartment block; Johji Manabe's *Outlanders Volume 4* receives the trade paperback treatment, the 168-page volume priced $12.95; *Ghost in the Shell* reaches issue 2, as does *Oh My Goddess Part 2*.

DC

Loose Cannon

Loose Cannon is a 4-part series showcasing DC's latest superhero, who makes an appearance in *Superboy #16*. The New Blood vigilante has made Metropolis a war zone, and a team of superpowered vigilante's are after Cannon when it look like he's killed Police Officer Eddie Walker; Captain Maggie Sawyer has sent in her own judge, jury and executioner - The Eradicator - not realising that Cannon is Walker. Written by Jeph Loeb with art by Adam Pollina, Cannon will be heading off for an ongoing monthly.

From the June cover-dated issues, many of DC's titles will be upgraded, with a consequent price hike. This will effect numerous titles, including the Superman and Batman groups, *The Books of Magic*, *Ghostdancing* and *The Invisibles*.

Although not expected to hit the dizzy heights achieved by the 'Death of Superman' storyline *Superman #100* and Clark Kent's imminent death is beginning to attract plenty of media attention in the USA with the *New York Post* publishing a story on January 5. *USA Today*, 'The CBS Morning News', 'ABC World News Tonight' and 'Entertainment Tonight' have all picked up on the story. In April, 'The Death of Clark Kent' runs through the pages of *Action Comics #710* - does Superman fail to save Lois Lane when a bomb rips through Metropolis? - *Superman: The Man of Steel #45* - Supes goes into hiding - *Superman #101* - leaving Metropolis without a protector - *Adventures of Superman #524* - and when he finds the villain behind his nightmare ordeal, will he be able to control himself? The story concludes next month in *Action Comics #711*.

April's #100 celebration is for *Justice League America* by Gerard Jones, Chuck Wojtkiewicz & Bob Dvorak available in both a regular and collector's edition.

Vertigo have picked up the rights to the *Tank Girl* movie adaptation, written by Peter Milligan with art by Andy Pritchett, and follow it with a 4-issue original mini-series by Milligan and Jamie Hewlett, *Tank Girl: The Odyssey*, with painted covers by Brian Bolland. Trapped in Ireland, Tank Girl is urged to return to Australia to save Booga's soul and career from being destroyed by a corporate shyster.

And - at long last - Garth Ennis & Phil Winslade's *Goddess* has been scheduled for launch on April 4, an 8-issue series about an ordinary girl with extraordinary powers. Garth talks about the series later this issue, and we'll feature Phil Winslade in the near future.

Grant Morrison & Philip Bond team up for *Kill Your Boyfriend* a Vertigo Voices 64-page black comedy one-shot about a rebellious teenage romance and English weirdness; a road movie in a double-decker bus.

Paradox Press release *The Big Book of Death*, 224 pages of Factoids about death, the macabre, the morbid and the inevitable. 71 artists are represented, including Steve Dillon, Phil Winslade and Richard Piers Rayner.

Triumph is a 4-issue series by Christopher (*The Ray*) Priest, Mike S. Miller & John Stokes, the story of Will MacIntyre, who's father has led a shocking double life...

Joe St. Pierre is the guest penciller of *Aquaman #9*...*Babylon 5 #5* begins a 4-part story by Tim

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Check out our *LISTING* at the back of this issue too!

DeHaas with artwork by John Ridgway...*The Ray Annual #1* is a 'Year One' adventure by Christopher Priest, Oscar Jiminez & Chip Wallace...*The New Titans Annual #11* is by Marv Wolfman, Greg Land, Keith Champagne & Will Blyberg...*Legion of Super-Heroes Annual #6* has contributions by Mark Waid, Tom Peyer, Alan Davis and Mark Farmer...*The Batman Adventures Annual #2* by Paul Dini, Glen Murakami & Bruce Timm relates Batman's first encounter with The Demon...*Batman: Knightsend* collects together the story from *Batman #509-510, Shadow of the Bat #29-30, Detective Comics #676-677, Legends of the Dark Knight #62-63, Catwoman #12, Robin #8* and 17 pages from *Robin #9*. That little lot runs to 320 pages for $14.95...*Deathstroke #48* begins a 4-part crossover, 'The crimelord/Syndicate War', with *The New Titans #122*, continuing in next month's *Darkstars #32*...Nick Choles debuts as penciller on *Primal Force #8*...Hal Jordan is about to be resurrected in *Green Lantern #63*...Ron Lim is the guest penciller on *Hawkman #21*...From #13, *Xombi* will be a mature readers title...

Peter David will pen the novelisation for *Batman Forever* and a junior novelisation is in the works by Alan Grant...and Applewood Books are to publish a facsimile edition of *The Adventures of Superman* by George Lowther, written in 1942...

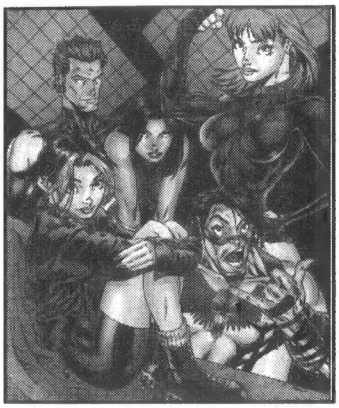
Fantagraphics

Robert Crumb's first new comic in two years will be released in March, *Self-Loathing Comics* is a 32-page co-production with Aline Kominsky-Crumb, where both detail their minute-by-minute working day. Also released in March is Al Columbia's second issue of *The Biologic Show*, *Love & Rockets #47* and *God's Bosom* by Jack Jackson, a 136-page look at Texas.

Image

Dale Keown's *Pitt* is to be published by Mark Silvestri's Top Cow Productions. Top Cow will take over the solicitation, advertising, and all the myriad things that go into producing a comic book; Keown will continue to write and draw the title, previously published by Full Bleed Studios.

Model by day: Cathy Christian, a familiar face at US conventions as Harris' Vampirella, is co-creating a new character and title, Avengelyne,



with Tony Lobito of Image. *Avengelyne* will be published in a mini-series and special later this year by Rob Liefeld's Maximum Press.

March launches include *Badrock #1* by Rob Liefeld & Eric Stephenson, available with 3 different covers, each by Liefeld but inked one each by Todd McFarlane, Stephen Platt and Dan Fraga. Also from Extreme comes *Glory #1* by Jo Duffy & Mike Deodato, Jr., spinning off from her appearances in *Glory Days and Extreme Sacrifice.*

From Erik Larsen's Highbrow Entertainment comes *Dragon: Blood and Guts* a 3-part mini-series by Jason Pearson & Karl Story about a gangsters moll, the killer who wants her dead and the hero who has to keep her alive. Elsewhere at Highbrow, *Deadly Duo #4* has been cancelled.

Gen 13 becomes an ongoing series, restarting from #1 from WildStorm Productions... and WildStorm releases *Gen 13 Rave* a behind the scenes look at the making of the original mini-series, including a tour of Homage Studios...

Jim Valentine's Shadowline Studios release *The Others #0*, the story continuing directly from *ShadowHawk #15* reprinting the first two Others stories from *ShadowHawk* #s 3 & 4 plus a new 5 page chapter which leads directly to next months #1.

Top Cow release the *Codename: StrykeForce* trade paperback, gathering together those hard-to-find

Kitchen Sink

From the creator of Big Baby, Dog Boy and *Skin Deep* comes *Black Hole #1*, the first three chapters in a new horror story about something weird that causes deformities in teenagers, something that has taken refuge in the woods near town and is haunting the dreams of student Keith Pearson.

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OPENS MIDDAY

early issues along with never before seen character designs by Marc Silvestri. And all-new is *Ripclaw* #1, CyberForce's most popular character getting his own series at last.

Malibu

April's big cosmic happening is Marvel and Malibu's first flip-book: *Rune/Silver Surfer #1*, developing out of events related in the *Godwheel* crossover, Rune slips through a cosmic breach in the Ultraverse and finds himself alone and disorientated in the Marvel Universe, with Silver Surfer heading his way to sort things out. No writer or artist has been announced for the Surfer half of the 48-page book, but we can reveal that Malibu's half will be written by Chris Ulm & Dan Danko with art by British artist Henry Flint. The flip book preludes a new era for Rune who will become the star of *Curse of Rune #1* the following month, written by Ulm and drawn by Kyle Hotz.

Rune: The Awakening gathers together the first 5 issues of the series by Chris Ulm & Barry Windsor-Smith as a $12.95 trade paperback.

It's Year Zero time for the Ultraverse, with *Ultraverse Year Zero: The Death of the Squad* a 4-issue series taking place before *Prime #1*...Lord Pumpkinhead and NecroMantra team up for a 4-issue flip-book series: one half is The Pump vs. Marvel's Loki, the other has the Malibu bad girl getting married...*Mantra: Spear of Destiny* is a 2-issue series by Mike Barr, Joel Adams & Maria Beccari...*Eliminator* gets his own series, starting with a 40-page #0, with art by Mike Zeck...*Prototype: Turf War* is a 4-issue mini-series taking the character in a new direction...

The Bravura imprint has two debuts: *Strikeback Special #1* features Strikeback in a 48-page one-shot by Jonathan Peterson, Kevin Maguire & Joe Rubenstein; and *Metaphysique* is by Norm Breyfogle, a 6-issue series starring a mysterious and compelling superhero, also available in a gold foil collector's edition.

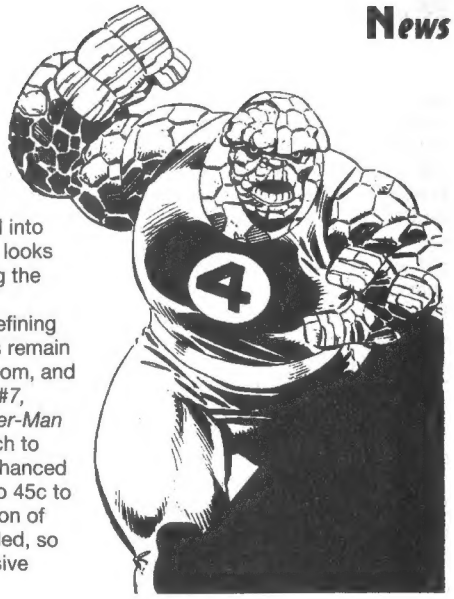
Marvel

Atlantis Rising

Fantastic Four: Atlantis Rising #1 begins a chaotic crossover which will literally change the face of the Earth, for when the Inhuman's Blue Area on the Moon is destroyed, Atlantis erupts from the ocean. The storyline runs through *Fantastic Force #8*, *Warlock and the Infinity Watch #41* and *Fantastic Four #401*. In the ensuing battle for power between Atlanteans, Inhumans, Deviants and Monsters - with Monster Island flooded - the FF's relationships with Namor, the Sub-Mariner, will be dramatically changed.

Taking A.I.M. is a 4-part full-scale invasion by A.I.M. beginning in *Captain America #440*, running through *Avengers #387* and into next month's issues. And it looks like Cap may well fall during the story.

As part of Marvel's redefining of its 2099 line, April's titles remain under the rule of Doctor Doom, and his grip takes in *Hulk 2099 #7*, *Ravage 2099 #31* and *Spider-Man 2099 #32*, all of which switch to heavier stock paper and enhanced computer colour. And go up 45c to $1.95. And the regular edition of *Hulk #427* has been cancelled, so you'd better get the expensive



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version, or kiss the new storyline goodbye

Tales of Marvels: Blockbuster is a 48-page *Marvels*-format fully painted (by Shawn Martinbrough) one-shot which takes a look at an event - *Fantastic Four #260* - from the eyes of ordinary folk. In the latter, a classic clash between Terrax, the Silver Surfer, Dr. Doom and the FF, an apartment building is destroyed...and Mike Baron's story is that of the people who lived in the apartment, forced out on the streets when their homes were destroyed.

It's anniversary time for Spider-Man with *Web of Spider-Man #125* bringing back the clone of Gwen Stacy, and *Spectacular Spider-Man #225* debuting an all-new Green Goblin. Both titles are 48-pages with 3D holodisk covers. In thee former you'll also learn the truth about Mary Jane's baby. As if that wasn't enough, there's the *Amazing Spider-Man Super Size Special #1*, a 64-page revelation of the origins of the symbiotes - to be continued in more Super Size Specials: *Spider-Man, Spectacular Spider-Man, Web of Spider-Man* and *Venom*; all this Spider-action leads to one big blow-out in June when the Spidey titles are relaunched.

Force Works #12, War Machine #15 and *Iron Man #317* are all 48-page flip books for a month, the flip-side being a 3-part War Machine/U.S.Agent/Hawkeye story...Glen Dakin takes over as scribe of *Clandestine #9* with Spanish artist Pino Rinaldi...*Thor #487* is the last with the current creative team of Roy Thomas, M.C. Wyman & Mike DeCarlo...Gary Erskine is the artist on *Blaze #11* in which a major character will be biting the dust...Biting the dust is what's about to happen to The Punisher, as *Punisher #103* begins the 5-part 'Countdown' storyline which will end all the Punisher titles in May. Numbered '4', *Punisher War Journal #79* is 'Countdown 3', and the final issues for May will be *Punisher War Zone #41* ('Countdown 2'), *The Punisher #104* ('Countdown 1') and *Punisher War Journal #80* (er...)...but he's not dead, and an all-new, ongoing Punisher will return in 1995...Two new members are added to the New Warriors in the fifth anniversary *New Warriors #60* which concludes a storyline begun in *Nova #18*, the final issue of the latter...do you really need to be told that April sees the end of the 'Age of Apocalypse' story arc? *X-Men: Omega* ships on April 25...who will survive, and how many time anomalies will remain in the real Universe?...The latest Marvel Select title is the 2-part *Flash Gordon* by Mark Schultz & Al Williamson, his first fully pencilled project in ten years...

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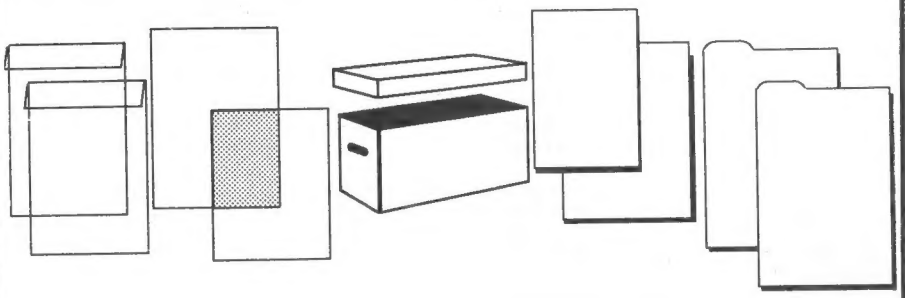

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Millennium

Bloodchilde #3 begins a 2-part vampire tale with Faye Perozich: hunted by the FBI, the vampire Childe travels to Pittsburgh to escape his tormentors and his past - but on his trail is another vamp, Nico, Turner, an obsessed FBI agent, the Death-like Kami, and a mysterious boy from Childe's past. Steve Pugh provides a cover and double-page pin-up.

John Bolton provides a story to *Sex & Death*, a 48-page one-shot.

Mojo Press

Joe R. Lansdale is the co-editor of *Weird Business* a 380-page b&w hardcover which adapts classic horror stories ranging from 'The Hell-Bound Train' by Robert Bloch to 'Jesting with Chaos', an Elric story by Michael Moorcock. Along the way there's stories by Poppy Z. Brite, Lansdale, Nancy Collins, Roger Zelazny, Neal Barrett Jr., and others.

Omni Comix

The science/sf magazine, *Omni*, published by Penthouse, is producing a 32-page comic for March priced $2.95, which will also include a copy of the magazine itself (usually priced $3.95). The comic contains 3 stories: 'High Guard' with art by Paris Cullins, 'Mission to Mars' by Andrew Robinson & Bob Wiacek, and 'Chessmen' by Ernie Colon. Penthouse Comix are also publishing **Penthouse Men's Adventure Comix** #1 with stories by Mark Texeira, Kevin Maguire, Jason Pearson, Dan Barry and others. As this is adults only, expect limited availability over here

Tekno Comix

Frank Miller has pencilled and inked the first issue of *Mickey Spillane's Mike Danger* which is set for May release. Miller has often said that Spillane's novels were the inspiration for *Sin City*. Max Allen Collins, also a noted

crime writer, will write the series which places a tough private eye from the 1950s in the New York of 2052.

Neil Gaiman's Wheel of Worlds is a 48-page story starring Gaiman's various Tekno creations, Mr. Hero and the Teknophage. Creators involved include Gaiman himself - co-plotting with John Ney Reiber, Rick Veitch, Bryan Talbot and Angus McKie.

Viz

Manga Vizion #1 is a new anthology magazine from Viz starring 'The Tragedy of P' by Rumiko (*Ranma*) Takahashi, 'Samurai Crusader' by Ryoichi (*Mai*) Ikegami and 'Ogre Slayer' by Kei Kusunoki.

Takahashi's 'Mermaid' series is also continued in a new 4-part series, *Mermaid's Gaze* launched in March, and a graphic novel collection of *The Return of Lum*. Sho Fumumura & Ryoichi Ikegami's *Sanctuary Vol.4* is also gathered as a 320-page trade paperback.

BRITISH NEWS

Blue Eyed Dog

The long delayed *Purr #3* should be available from all good newsagents in London and through indie record shops and comic stores nationwide. The third issue takes a look at the hard boiled worlds of writer James Ellroy, photographer Richard Kern, and includes an exclusive story from the late Derek Raymond who died last July. There's plenty of other stories, strips and interviews, and a limited to 3000 ten inch EP.

From *#4, Purr* will go bi-monthly for the reduced price of £2.95, and will shortly be releasing the first in a series of graphic novels. Ted McKeever's *Metropol* will be published in a 'Director's Cut' edition weighing in at 420 pages.

Dancing Elephant

Paul Grist's bi-monthly (allegedly) *Kane #6* is now available, Paul having lost some time in the summer of '94 which he's trying to catch up. If you've not seen the Frank Miller-inspired Kane yet, Paul can be contacted at Dancing Elephant Press, 207 Marlcliffe Road, Sheffield S6 4AH. £1.80 per issue or £10.80 for 6 issues, postage included.

Deadline

Axis Mundi, long-time star of the small press anthology 'Inkling', is to feature in *Deadline* beginning with issue 67. Drawn by Garry Marshall from scripts by Ian Carney, the 4-part series reveals what happens when a 14-year-old girl adopts the identity of Axis, a huge skinhead, to indulge in a spot of virtual reality vandalism.

Fleetway

Judge Dredd Megazine #74 continues the line-up from the #73 relaunch behind a Shimura cover: Judge Anderson begins a 7-part series, 'Something Wicked' by Alan Grant & Steve Sampson (until #76 when Charlie Gillespie takes over); the third in a series of 'Shimura' one-offs which have a linked theme of assassinations, 'The Transcendental Assassin' about a philosophical assassination school, by Robbie Morrison & Simon Fraser; 'Judge Dredd: Skar' by John Wagner & Ashley Wood; 'Maelstrom' by Robbie Morrison & Colin MacNeil; and 'Harmony' by Chris Standley & Jim Murray. #75's Shimura one-off has art by Duke Mighten.

Prog 928 of *2000AD* is a relaunch issue with new stories for Judge Dredd - 'Crusade' by Mark Millar, Grant Morrison & Mick Austin, Rogue Trooper by Steve White & Henry Flint, Finn Book 2 by Pat Mills, Tony Skinner & Paul Staples, and Harlem Heroes

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Comic World UP-FRONT

CONTINUED

Manga Mania #20, on sale now. The 32-page booklet includes capsule reviews, plot summaries and ratings for 40 of the top anime titles available in the UK. The same issue also features the first episode of Kia Asamiya's 'Silent Mobius' strip.

The second *Manga Heroes* comic goes on sale February 21, and features *Appleseed* by Masamune Shirow. Book Two follows an earlier run in *Manga Mania*, and the issue is rounded out with an interview and a free *Appleseed* postcard.

Coming soon from Manga will be a reprinting of the *X-Files* comic published by Topps.

N-Studios

Widow is the title of N-Studio's first launch, to be solicited by both Previews and Advance Comics in March. Joining the British team are Canadians Lance Gueck, Stephen Sadowski and Janine Johnston who are producing *Anarchy*. Editor Sam Carlisle tells us that ashcans of various projects will be available at Glasgow, including two more series, *City Limits* by Billy Shakes & Laurance Ellison, and *Mercy Kill* by Lance Gueck & Jonathan Metthewson III.

Penguin

The *Tank Girl* movie adaptation by Peter Milligan & Andy Pritchett will be available in March, priced £6.99 with the same John Bolton cover as the DC/Vertigo version. A novelisation of the movie by Martin Millar will also be released, priced £5.99.

Titan

Forthcoming releases from Titan Books include *Classic Judge Dredd* gathering stories from Titan's earliest reprints, including the Wagner & Bolland classic Judge Death series.

Caption '95

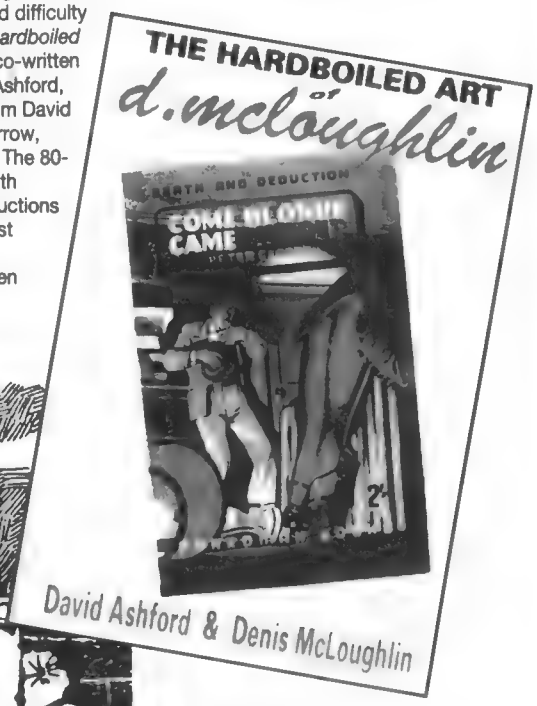
This year's Caption '95 Small Press Convention will be held in Oxford in July 22, at the Oxford Union Society, St Michael's Street. Membership is available in advance at £8 (or £5 if you don't have a regular wage). Tickets on the door will be £10, so save yourself some cash by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to CAPTION 95, 25 Hart Street, Oxford OX2 6BN, or you can e-mail on scottj@oup.co.uk. Various events, speakers, workshops and an exhibition are being lined up...more details as they arrive.

Compal

Comic Book postal auctions' latest catalogue, released the first week of March, will include as a highlight an extremely rare *Dandy #1* from December 1937, one of only a handful of known copies. The catalogue estimate for the first appearance of Korky the Cat and Desperate Dan is in the £1750-2000 range, making it the most expensive British comic - our *Detective #27*. The catalogue is free and available by calling 0171 586 3007.

Denis McLoughlin

Fans of Denis McLoughlin's artwork who have had difficulty getting hold of *The Hardboiled Art of d. mcloughlin* co-written by Denis and David Ashford, can obtain copies from David at 53 Moat Drive, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 4RY. The 80-page book is filled with black & white reproductions of some of Denis' best work, plus a colour selection of rarely seen book covers. Price: £9.95 including postage, cheques payable to David Ashford.



People and Publishing

Simon Bisley has had some problems getting hold of his latest work: customs officers seized copies of Verotik posted to Simon by publisher Glenn Danzig on the grounds that they were obscene.

Alan Davis has bounced back after the announcement that he was to quit ClanDestine. He and inker **Mark Farmer** will be producing the covers for *Legion of Super-Heroes* from #68, shipping March 14. The two also provide art for an 8-page story in this year's *Legion of Super-Heroes Annual #6*, a 'Year One' tale penned by Tom Peyer, released in April.

David S. Gregory, one-time editor of the comic *Tiger* died on January 16, aged 66. He had been ill for some months. Gregory worked as a sub-editor on *Lion* in the late 1950s before taking over the editorship of *Tiger* in 1963 from departing editor, Derek Birnage. He wrote a number of text stories and strips in both papers, notably 'Paddy Payne' in *Lion* and 'Spike & Dusty' in *Tiger*. He later became a managing editor at Fleetway in 1979 in charge of the successful World of Knowledge and nurserey comics, retiring in 1986.

David Lapham, an early artist on Valiant's *Harbinger* and Defiant's *Warriors of Plasm* is setting up his own company, El Capitan, to write and self-publish *Stray Bullets*, which will debut in March. Described as *Reservoir Dogs* meets Springsteen's *Nebraska* and Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song*, it sounds like an odd departure for the superhero artist.

Messrs **Millar and Morrison** are proudly announcing the sale of their souls to Marvel: "We've both written Batman and a few other DC mainstream guys but getting our hands on Spider-Man, Captain America and The Avengers....Fucking Hell! It's a laugh," claim the dynamic duo. The first series to hit the stands will be an on-going monthly entitled *The Skrull Kill Krew* which is "going to be the most extreme Marvel Universe book anyone's ever seen." Marvel have even sprung some cash for a designer: Brendan McCarthy. Up-coming projects include some X-Men tales for this years annuals, and, to bring them up to speed on what's been happening X-wise over the past few years, the pair put a 'fan wanted' notice in a local comic shop. The successful applicant filled them in on continuity and earned some cash in hand talking about his favourite comics. Great if you can get the work, I guess.

Frank Quitely is keeping busy: he's now finished pencilling a *Lobo* story and has the script for *Flex Mentalo* to hand. In the UK we'll have to contend with six covers for *The Complete Judge Dredd*.

The Earthquake which struck Japan in January causing widespread destruction and the death of some 2,400 people thankfully affected the indigenous *manga* industry very little. **Masamune Shirow**, whose home-town of Kobe was worst effected, managed to get a message to friends saying he was alive before further communication became impossible; his publishers, Seishinsha, based in Osaka, were out of action for a week when their building was damaged, but appear to be back in business.

Meanwhile, in Wolverhampton....19 year-old Amerjit Sangha has officially changed his name to **Spiderman**: "I hated that name," he told us. "Nobody used to call me Amerjit anyway: everybody shortened my name down to Ammo, and I was thinking of changing it through deed poll to Ammo properly, but I thought, I may as well go the whole hog." A long-time comic fan, a long-time customer at Nowhere Comics where **Batman** once served behind the counters, with plans to create his own comic, the newly named Spiderman caused a stir in both local and national newspapers: how had people reacted to the change? "Well, most of my friends are from Nowhere Comics anyway, so they think it's cool. My girlfriend was a bit wary about it at first because if we ever get married she'll have to be called Mrs. Spiderman."

Batman moved back to Manchester and has not been heard of for three years.

BLEEDING

Once upon a time (about 18 months ago, actually) I received a letter from the 'Amble Town Womens' Football Club' asking me to donate some artwork for an auction to raise funds. They'd been given my name and Bryan Talbot's by Glenn Fabry, who'd been kind enough to help them himself. I'm a kind man, as well - at least, I like to think so - and I thought the idea of supporting a Women's Football Club was a good one, so I sent some artwork to them via their representative, Pauline Valentine, and thought no more about it.

Last July I had a chat with John Ridgway, who happened to mention an extraordinary advert he'd seen in the June edition of *Comics International* from a cartoon art dealer called 'B & P Valentine'. The ad was extraordinary because it was offering for sale literally hundreds of pages of *2000AD* artwork, classified by series title, e.g. 'Slaine', 'Judge Dredd', 'Rogue Trooper', etc. This alone was unusual enough to interest my curiosity, but what intrigued me more was the name, 'Valentine': it rang a bell.

As I've said, amongst the pages on sale were some from 'Slaine', which I knew Dave Pugh had worked on. Could some of the pages be Dave Pugh's, I thought, and could any of them have possibly been acquired by means of a 'charity' auction request? I called Dave to find out. As soon as I mentioned the reason for the call and the name 'Valentine' it was as if the name 'Thatcher' had passed my lips in a conversation with Dennis Skinner. As far back as '86 Dave had been approached for auction artwork by the 'Valentines' under the umbrella of the 'Brian W. Aldiss Appreciation Society'. He'd donated some. Later, he was approached by 'Bus Stop - The Marilyn Munroe Appreciation Society', which had strangely similar notepaper to that of the 'Brian W. Aldiss Appreciation Society'. Later still - three years later, in fact - 'Limelight - The Charlie Chaplin Appreciation Society' approached him. Dave donated to this one, and shortly thereafter discovered, accidentally, what had happened to his 'auction' art. In the course of an ordinary phone conversation with fellow artist, Alan Burrows, Dave discovered that Bill 'Valentine' had traded a page of his 'Dan Dare' art for two pages of Alan's work. In response to Dave's angry enquiry about this, Mr 'Valentine' claimed to have bid for Dave's artwork himself at the auction. He said he was now setting himself up as a dealer and asked if Dave would like to supply him with more art for hiss new business. Dave declined the offer.

I contacted Steve Holland of *Comic World* and Dez Skinn of *Comics International* to inform them about all this so they could at least be alerted to the possibility of some real evidence appearing of major misdemeanours regarding 'B & P Valentine'. Steve decided he'd do some investigating himself.

I decided to find out if the art myself and Glenn had donated (Bryan Talbot had, luckily, not go around to sending any) was on the sales list of 'B & P Valentine',

GAZETTE - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1994

Charity worker conned artist

A CHARITY worker conned an artist into handing over several pieces of art work and then tried to sell them, a court heard this week.

The paintings, worth £160, were only retrieved when the artist, David Lloyd, saw them advertised in a magazine.

Alnwick magistrates heard how 57-year-old William Godward, of Cheviot Dale, in Amble, told Mr Lloyd that he was doing charity work for a local football club and wanted some drawings to auction off.

It was only when the victim saw an advert in a magazine for art work being sold that he recognised them as being his own.

Prosecuting, Mr Christopher Riley said: "Mr Lloyd arranged for a friend to try and purchase the paintings to see if the seller was Mr Godward and, although the transaction wasn't completed, the police were called in."

The defendant, who pleaded guilty to two deception charges, told the court that he was unemployed and in financial trouble.

He added: "Over the years I have raised thousands of pounds for charity and I am humiliated at having to appear in court. I am very sorry for what I have done."

Godward was fined £100 for obtaining by deception and no separate penalty was imposed for the second charge. He was ordered to pay £30 court costs.

and, not wishing to represent myself in this enquiry, to do so I enlisted the aid of my friends Dave Jackson and Chris McLoughlin. Chris asked if they had any Glenn Fabry art for sale and Dave asked if they had anything by me. They had both, priced and on sale as part of their stock - a year after they were supposedly been auctioned to help the finances of 'Amble Town W.F.C.'.

A side benefit of Chris and Dave's enquiries was the acquisition of a sales list specifying artists rather than just series titles. They included Dave Gibbons, Arthur Ranson, Carlos Ezquerra, Cam Kennedy, John McCrea, Ian Gibson, Steve Dillon, Brett Ewins, Paul Neary and Brendan McCarthy. I contacted all those I could reach to find out if they knew about 'B & P Valentine' and how their artwork had passed into the dealers hands.

At this time, Steve Holland sent me an extensive letter detailing what he'd discovered about them, and enclosed a copy of their latest scam: another artwork request which claimed to be raising money to refurbish - I quote - "our local Old Folks hospice, a free hospital for old age pensioners". This letter was on notepaper headed 'Friends of Northumbria Association', was signed by someone called 'Mr W. Brownlow' - who just happened to have the same handwriting as Bill Valentine - and carried the same address used on the 'B & P Valentine' dealers letters. Steve had come by it because the 'Valentines' had sent him a bunch of them, with a polite request that he send them on to various cartoonists on their behalf!

Enquiries revealed, unsurprisingly, that no 'Local Old Folks Hospice' or 'Free Hospital for Old Age Pensioners' or anything remotely like it existed in the area the letter came from, and all hospices and hospice organisations anywhere near them had no knowledge of their 'charitable' efforts on their behalf.

At this point, laying criminal charges against the 'Valentines' seemed worth contemplating as an inadequate but legal alternative to skinning them alive before an invited audience. I had a conversation with my local C.I.D. and presented all the evidence myself and Steve Holland had gathered so far to Judith Preston-Rouse & Co. - the C.C.G.'s legal advisors - so that I could clarify the actual charge to be levelled against the 'Valentines': it was "obtaining property by deception".

Meanwhile, artists from the Valentine lists were getting in touch. Of all those I'd contacted, only Arthur Ranson had clearly been conned into contributing to their sales stock as myself and others had: a 'Dr Who' piece had been obtained from him by a 'Friends of Northumbria Association' letter sent to him earlier in the year. All the other artists contacted had no knowledge of 'B & P Valentine', hadn't responded to, or received, any unverifiable 'charity' requests, and had no idea how their work was being offered for sale by the 'Valentines'. In all those cases, artwork had reached the 'Valentines' via Fleetway Editions Ltd., who had apparently given them masses of artwork which they otherwise planned to dump or dispose of some other way.

Now, up to this point, in dealing with the illegal side of the 'Valentines' operation, I've been able to give you pure facts. The legal side of their operation, however - that is, selling from a core stock of Fleetway art - is, perversely, shrouded in obscurity. I can't give you irrefutable details of how all this valuable material came into the hands of villains because I don't know. I know this much to be unquestionably true: the work of Paul Neary and John Ridgway was given to the 'Valentines' because they did not make the trip down to Fleetway to pick up artwork they had been notified was there for them to collect.

HEARTS

Last year, Fleetway contacted a number of their artists to inform them that their used art could be collected by them or disposed of by Fleetway, and gave a deadline of two weeks for them to decide which option they'd prefer. Each of the artists named above have their own particular stories to tell about this and I can't present them here; nor can I present Fleetway's position in this because it hasn't been made clear to me. One thing does seem clear to me, though, and it's this: by contacting artists to invite them to pick up their work you are admitting to their ownership of it. If, subsequently, you are instrumental in this artwork finding its way into the hands of someone who is going to profit from its ownership or sale, you are conniving in theft. I sincerely believe that the bulk of the art given by Fleetway to 'B & P Valentine' was given under honourable circumstances and it's merely unfortunate that it was given to crooks; but it would be nice to be assured this. I look forward to Fleetway giving us all a full explanation of their actions. I know the C.C.G. is still actively striving to achieve this. [*See Letters, Page 57-Steve*].

At the end of September, satisfied I now had more than enough evidence to prove a complaint, I made a witness statement to Brighton C.I.D. and reported the 'Valentines' crime against me. The evidence I presented was extensive - it included their earlier activities from '86 and their latest known attempt at deception in August of '94. Brighton passed the matter up to the police in Alnwick, Northumberland, where the criminals were based. No less than seven separate charges of deception were laid against them from the various people they had defrauded or attempted to defraud - or, at least, those people who had been made aware of it. Confronted with the evidence in a police interview on November 11th, the 'Valentines' pleaded guilty to all charges. When I was told this I felt extremely pleased, to say the least, and looked forward to seeing them receive an appropriate sentence for deceiving so many good people and having the complete lack of heart to make money from the terminally ill.

On December 14th the case came up in court in Alnwick. Bill Godward (the real name of Bill 'Valentine') received a £100 fine and was ordered to pay £30 costs. Only my charge and the attempted fraud charge Steve Holland laid were heard in order to save the court time; though I was advised by the policeman in charge of the enquiry that a hearing of all the further charges against him would probably not have brought any additional penalties. Apparently, it was his first offence - or, to be more accurate, the first thing he'd been caught for.

Of course, if this is justice, I'm a Dutchman - and a result like this could make you wonder whether all the effort was worth it. But we can't think like that. On the plus side, he has been shamed in his local newspaper. Apparently, he had some kind of respectable image to keep up as a manager of the 'Amble Town W.F.C.' which *does* exist and had done well - and this has been somewhat tarnished. Also on the plus side, we can spread the tale of the 'Valentines' far and wide, so that they're shoved out of *our* business, at least - and I sincerely hope that Fleetway are sympathetic to that view.

The unmistakable big minus, though, is...welll...we should have had that skinning, shouldn't we?

For your information the 'Valentines' operated from two known addresses and numbers: 21 Cheviotdale, Amble, Northumberland, NE65 0BW, on 0665 711714; and 98, Coquet View Caravan Park, Beach Road, Warkworth, Northumberland, NE65 0WS, on 0665 713083.

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Opening the X-FILES

STEPHEN JEWELL TALKS TO CHARLIE ADLARD ABOUT HIS NEW AND UPCOMING WORK FOR MARVEL, TOPPS AND IMAGE

Charlie Adlard has certainly come a long way since the last time he appeared in* Comic World. *From lowly beginnings illustrating 'Armitage' in the* Judge Dredd Megazine *and* Dances with Demons *for Marvel UK, Adlard his risen to the heights of being a much in-demand artist working for the likes of Image, Marvel US and Topps.

Adlard's most recent work to appear on the shelves of your local comic shop was the five part *Mars Attacks* series from Topps. *Mars Attacks* came about while Adlard spent some time working in Jim Shooter's late Defiant studios, drawing the likes of *Dark Dominion* and *Good Guys*. "I was working for Defiant in the States for about a month and a half and, at the time [late 1993] I was contracted by [Topps boss] Jim Salicrup, who had seen my work previously via Star*Reach [the comic talent agency] probably over a year ago. When he'd first seen it, I was told that he said that I was the artist for *Mars Attacks* and I thought 'That's nice'...but thinking that it wasn't going to happen. And I hadn't heard about it for ages when out of the blue came this phone call; I met Jim for dinner and he offered me the series."

Inspired by the classic '50s bubblegum cards, *Mars Attacks* brought the classic H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* Martians-invade-Earth scenario right up to date. *Mars Attacks* was written by former *Justice League* and *Lobo* scripter and artist Keith Giffen. "Keith's a great guy to work for. He's very accommodating and east to work with and, in fact, we're doing a lot more together." *Mars Attacks* was recently collected into one volume with featured "three extra pages of more *Mars Attacks* brilliance," from Charlie.

Adlard's next collaboration with Giffen was 'Lunatik' for *Marvel Comics Presents* where he inked Giffen's pencils. 'Lunatik' was meant to become a flagship character for *M.C.P.* [*it began in issue 173* - Steve] but with the title's cancellation, its run has been curtailed. However, Adlard is happy to report that "the word on the grapevine is that 'Lunatik' might become a full series next year."

After 'Lunatik', Adlard then worked with Giffen on the *Supreme Annual* for Image. "Keith rang up and said 'Hello, Charlie. Welcome to Image!' and I thought 'Oh, good. Money!' He's doing layouts and I'm finishing them." Adlard is set to do more work for Image and there's also talk of further collaborations with Giffen for Image and Marvel, "working the same way, doing finishes, layouts, etc..."

Starting in January will be the *X-Files* from Topps which will be Adlard's first on-going monthly series. "It's good because I'm very fast. It's nice to have something regular every month. At least I won't be twiddling my thumbs for long every month waiting for writers to catch up with me." *X-Files* is the comic book version of the hit TV series which is currently amassing a cult following on BBC2. Scripted by Stefan Petrucha, *X-Files* features F.B.I. agents Scully and Mulder investigating unsolved cases of paranormal weirdness. "I do like the TV series. It's very, very good for American TV. The characters are nicely drawn."

Adlard has found capturing the likenesses of the actors concerned quite a challenge. "I'll say now in print that likenesses aren't my strong point. The TV people seem to want me to get the likenesses as much as possible. I find it very easy to do Mulder... Scully's a bit harder because her face is a lot less distinctive. The only problem with doing the *X-Files* is that there's a lot more bureaucracy to get through. It has to be approved two or three times by the TV and comic companies before you can start on the next stage. That's the only gripe...otherwise I'm enjoying it."

Coming in February from Marvel will be a *Black Widow/Nightraven* team-up. "I enjoyed that very much. Nightraven's the sort of character who suits my style down to the ground." The series was (again) meant to be serialised in the late *M.C.P.* but will now be presented as a one-shot under Marvel's Select banner. "Thankfully fate has treated me quite kindly and put it into a better format and, again, the prospects of Marvel turning Nightraven into a full blown series interests me. We'll see how this one-off works. It's very *film noir,* very moody, which is exactly the sort of stuff I enjoy doing."

"*Black Widow/Nightraven* is written by *Manga Mania* editor, Cefn Ridout, with whom Adlard previously worked on

"THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH DOING THE X-FILES IS THAT THERE'S A LOT MORE BUREAUCRACY TO GET THROUGH. IT HAS TO BE APPROVED TWO OR THREE TIMES BY THE TV AND COMIC COMPANIES BEFORE YOU CAN START ON THE NEXT STAGE. THAT'S THE ONLY GRIPE...OTHERWISE I'M ENJOYING IT."

a two part Scarlet Witch story for *M.C.P.* "The whole thing's set at night apart from the end. The story's set in Russia...it was really nice to draw some interesting architecture. It's just really good mood stuff." However, the change in format might mean that the story may read somewhat truncated. "We knew very early on that the thing was probably going to be reprinted anyhow. I think Cefn tried to write it as a whole but, on the other hand, it's very hard if you're writing an eight part series since you're going to have eight climaxes in it."

Adlard is less enthusiastic about the graphic novel he drew for HarperCollins which is probably going to appear next May. "It's called *Playing the Game* and is written by world famous novelist Doris Lessing. God knows when it's going to come out but I don't care."

Last but definitely not least is Adlard's first effort at writing and drawing. "I've had the honour of being accepted into the hallowed halls of Les Cartoonists Dangereux and I've done my first written and drawn strip for *Le Roquet* which is called 'Jim'." Inspired by a character Adlard met at the 1994 Angouleme comics festival, 'Jim' will literally eat his way into the pages of comic book history.

As well as being good, Adlard has garnered a reputation for being fast: "At the last UKCAC, Sean Philips and I had a little conversation about who was the fastest and he seemed to think that I was fastest. I was refuting that, saying 'No, Sean. You're the fastest. Look at how many comics you've drawn in the last year,' but he seems to think that I was the fastest. Sean and I seem to have a reputation for being the speedy ones. I can do two finished pages a day no problem, and I can probably do more. It takes just under two weeks to do a twenty-two page comic." Perhaps a good idea for the next UKCAC would be a race between Adlard and Philips to settle the score once and for all.

And if that isn't enough, he spends his spare time banging the drums in his band. I'll leave the last word to Charlie: "Come and see the Bogus Monks in Shrewsbury if you have the chance."

STEPHEN JEWELL would like to thank Brad! Brooks and those other crazy Dangerous Cartoonists for their questions, laughter and abuse over the course of this interview.

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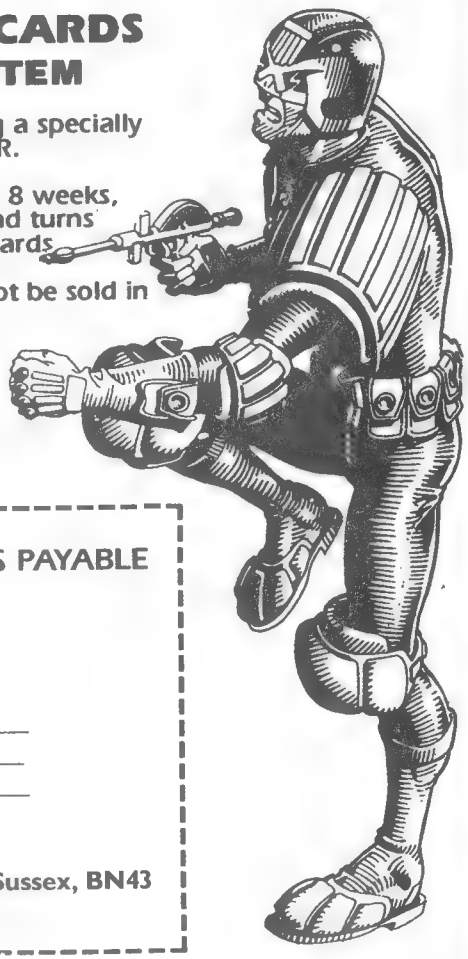

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Hi Folks!! Nineteen ninety five!! Only five years to the millennium!! Wowch!! Will the famous British weekly 2000AD still be around (I predict: only if the Stallone movie is a mega smash) and if so what will its new title be: answers on a postcard to Gutenberghus, not us, yep, the illustrious Judge Dredd is now owned by the Danes.
DC in the USA produce two Dredd titles under licence which have been freely available in the UK. Up to now that is; the most recent distributor catalog solicitations from the States specify that both Judge Dredd and Legends of the Law are available for sale in the continental USA and Canada only.
Want another prediction. OK! I reckon that with UK sales removed from the print runs J.D. and L.O.T. Law won't last more than another 4 or 5 issues. So it looks like another icon crashes against the barrier of bureaucratic contractual lawyerese.
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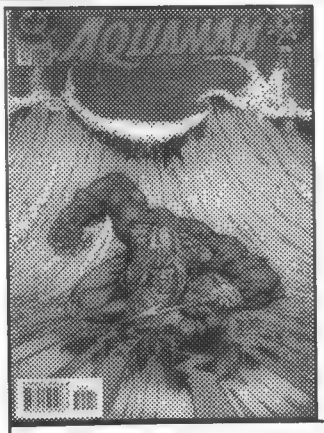

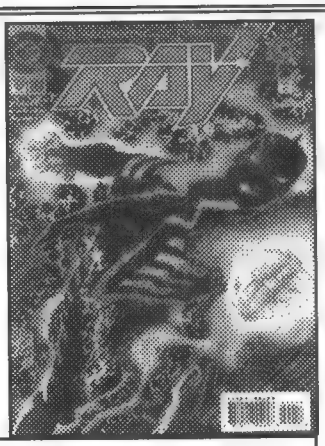

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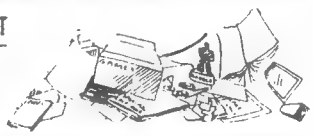

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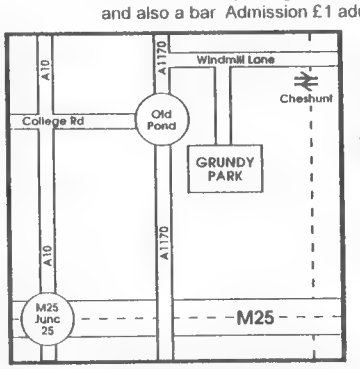

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#1

APRIL '95

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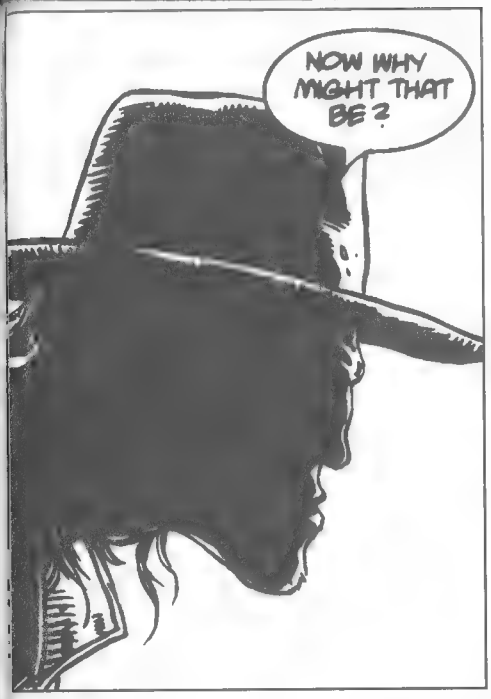
The last twelve months or so have proved to be something of a transitional period for Garth Ennis. He finished his popular run on *Hellblazer* while *The Demon* rapidly approaches cancellation. However, he will be back this February with *Preacher*, Vertigo's second creator-owned, on-going title after ***The Invisibles***; later on in the year, ***The Hitman*** will spin-off from *The Demon*

AN INTERVIEW WITH GARTH ENNIS BY STEPHEN JEWELL

PREACHER MAN

...his own book. Like Grant Morrison in *The Invisibles*, *Preacher* provides Ennis with an arena to explore most of his interests and pre-occupations in one place. However, as he explains down the line from Belfast, the genesis of *Preacher* was perhaps more by circumstance than design.

"Steve Dillon and I needed something to do after *Hellblazer*. We'd known it's done time we were going to be leaving *Hellblazer* and around about summer of last year, we started thinking about a replacement. We went through various ideas, maybe the *Hellblazer* art



created and doing something with them. But that idea went down the pan since we killed them all. Really, over the course of the latter part of 1993 and the first half of 1994, *Preacher* kind of developed from the idea of replacing *Hellblazer* in our workload. The characters, stories, situations and so on came later.

"*Preacher* is a young guy called Jesse Custer. Now, he starts out in our story as minister to a very small town in Southern Texas and he's fairly devout, but he's having a lot of problem with his faith because no-one in the town has any which for a minister would be a bit of a drawback. We get a hint from time to time that he has a sort of wild past...certainly when the story begins he's very much settled. The story kicks off when he's hit and bonded with an incredibly powerful spiritual entity called Genesis which is being held in Heaven for reasons which become apparent later. Genesis also wipes out the Texas town so that's that problem taken care of. But once Jesse is bonded with this thing he starts to find out all sorts of things about the faith that he had, the religion he was a part of in terms of Heaven itself with the relationship between Heaven and Hell and the way God and the angels work. He discovers a lot of unpleasant truths about them and that sets him up to become *Preacher*, and by the fourth episode he would have discovered the entire set up, the whole big scam and beyond. The on-going concern of the book, I suppose, is Jesse's search for the one person who would be able to give him all the answers. He would also be able to go public with this and tell everyone on Earth about the way this thing has been set up."

Jesse is blessed with the power to always be obeyed. "He speaks with something which his ex-girlfriend Tulip

WHEN I SEE SOMETHING THAT I DON'T LIKE, I HAVE THE TENDENCY TO TAKE THE PISS OUT OF IT

christens 'The Word of God' because it's as strong as the word of God, but essentially it's very simple: he says something, he gives you an order, it's obeyed. No-one can help themselves. Of course, it's up to Jesse to use that particular power as he sees fit...possibly abuse it as well."

Like *Hellblazer*, *Preacher* boasts an interesting and varied supporting cast. "His ex-girlfriend from his wild days of youth is a young lady called Tulip O'Hare. She's trying desperately hard to be an assassin but is making a bit of a mess of it. Another mysterious sort, Jesse's best friend, is an Irish guy called Cassidy who turns out to have a bit of a secret of his own in that he likes killing people and drinking their blood.

"The chief villain of the piece is The Saint of Killers. He's a gunslinger from the days of the wild west who's been sleeping under Boot Hill for the last hundred years, King Arthur-like, I suppose. The angels of Heaven send him out after Jesse. He's a kind of spiritual Terminator: he goes out and kills and kills and kills and slaughters everything that gets in his way and he's after Jesse so that he can return this Genesis entity to Heaven. By #4, by the time that he's run into Jesse, he'll have become extremely pissed off at our hero. Beyond #4. he's not just doing this job the angels want him to do but just wants to kill Jesse because he's got his own interest in him, he's wound up enough that its become a personal thing.

"Apart from that, there's Sheriff Hugo Root and his dreadful son, Arseface. Arseface is the only man in

A MILE BENEATH THIS CORNERSTONES, AT BOOT HILL, ALL HELL IS ABOUT TO BREAK LOOSE
WHY'S
FORCE OF HABIT
HELP YOU WITH SOMETHIN'?
NOW WHY MIGHT THAT BE?
LISTEN
A BEING HAS ESCAPED FROM HEAVEN, AND HE'S COMING TO EARTH. THIS NIGHT ITS NAME IS GENESIS AND IT IS MIGHTY

existence who's managed to take a shotgun hit in the face in a suicide attempt and survive. He's the light relief, I suppose."

Jesse also has a kind of spiritual guide in the form of the Duke himself - John Wayne! "He comes along when Jesse is alone and no-one else is about and offers advice which may or may not be any good whatsoever. As I say, Jesse is the only one who seems able to see him and he hasn't actually mentioned him to anyone else so as to whether he's actually there or if he's just some sort of figment of our hero's slightly demented imagination is another thing entirely. The third storyline of the first year actually goes into Jesse's childhood a lot, where you see the rather odd upbringing he had at the hands of his grandmother. That explains a lot about how he turned out a bit weird."

Obvious comparisons can be drawn between the Duke's role in *Preacher* and the relationship between Clarence and Elvis in *True Romance*. "The difference is that rather than offering advice about how to deal with particular situations, John Wayne does actually seem to be able to fill in information that Jesse doesn't know, which is kind of handy. But he can't step into a gunfight to save him or actually do him any material good." I was curious as to whether Ennis anticipates facing any legal problems with Wayne's estate, but he doubts that they would come across his comic."If you don't tell them, I won't."

TRUE FAITH

Religion has been a theme running through Ennis' work since the early days of 'True Faith' in *Crisis*. I can't help but wonder why he's so set against organised religion? "One of the main reasons would be that I don't like it and when I see something that I don't like, I have the tendency to take the piss out of it. At some stage I may write something with a major attack on Christianity and religion in general and really take the thing apart from start to finish, but at the minute I'm content just to mock from the sidelines." Ennis said at the last UKCAC that anyone who was offended by the religious elements in *Hellblazer* would be even more put out by *Preacher*. "Certainly the first four part storyline since that's the one that set up the whole concern of the book and establishes early on the themes that will be involved in all future storylines. They're the ones that are going to offend people like that. Although I get the feeling that with something like *Hellblazer*, or indeed *Preacher*, the number of people who read books like that and do get offended, I think tend to drop them pretty quickly. I don't think they stay with them to come back month after month to be offended."

Preacher sees Ennis continuing his partnership with *Hellblazer* artist, Steve Dillon, with whom he's struck an obvious rapport. "Steve is one of the best artists going. He's got to the

point where from a drawing point of vie, he's got it all down pat. What he likes to concentrate on now is the storytelling aspects and that, I think, is particularly refreshing these days. Apart from the fact that I very much admire the way he works and the way he tells a story, it's also the fact that we do pretty much see eye to eye on all this kind of thing. We have broadly the same sense of humour. We like to tell the same kind of stories and we're good friends anyway. So, I guess there's this kind of empathy which develops when you're working on a story. Each of us trusts the other and has a broad idea of what the other is going to do. I think when you have two people working like that, it does tend to show."

Like *Hellblazer*, Glenn Fabry will also provide the covers to *Preacher*. "I've seen the first one. I was actually over at Glenn's house last week and saw the second one being drawn. It's phenomenal stuff." Ennis also sees eye to eye with Fabry and I wonder if they plan to work on anything more substantial. "We are talking about doing something but it would be way, way down the line because Glenn's got to get this *Judgement on Gotham* Part Three out of the way first. But theoretically, once he's finished that, his next comic strip work will be with me."

Ennis also has a close working relationship with his *Demon* collaborator, John McCrea, who drew 'Troubled Souls', the strip that launched both their careers back in 1989. "Johnny and I tend to laugh at the same kind of stuff, the same reflections and things like that. We definitely see eye to eye. The stuff we've been doing in *The Demon* with the miserable sales figures of that thing, I sometimes think that we're actually doing the comic for each other and barely anybody else because we're getting next to no feedback on it, although what we do get is very rewarding." *The Demon* is scheduled to end with #58 which comes out in March. Ennis admits that he didn't know exactly how low sales figures were on the book until he had actually started writing it. "To tell the truth, I found it more of a shame to leave *The Demon* than *Hellblazer* because with a character like Constantine you can always go back to him. I actually have an idea for a *Hellblazer* story I'd like to do next year sometime. But, Etrigan really does turn people off, the main problem being the rhyming which is the thing that decides on the audience for the book. They look at it and either go 'That's really clever. I quite like that,' or they go, 'Oh, christ, I can't be bothered with this.'"

Ennis believes that if DC are to resurrect *The Demon* again, Etrigan will have to be altered drastically. "They're going to have to get rid of the rhyming and probably do some kind of dark, moody, Vertigo style re-write on the whole Jason Blood/Etrigan relationship. What they're probably going to do is totally remove any humorous aspects of the book. That might make the characters sell better. I think it's a shame to leave *The Demon* because I don't think I'm going to get another crack at writing him that way and I really liked the little yellow bastard."

Preacher © Garth Ennis & Steve Dillon

THE HITMAN

However, from the ashes of *The Demon* there will spring life in the form of a new series starring Etrigan's erstwhile partner in crime, *Hitman*. *Hitman* will be broken down into an on-going series of *Legends of the Dark Knight* style story arcs with the first and numerous others also being drawn by McCrea. "I think there's a way of doing a gunfighter kind of character and mixing him in with all the superhero type characters and thinking he'll survive that way. I don't want a situation like *Chain Gang War* which was a great story but it did tend to die the death very quickly because there weren't any superheroes in it. The brutal truth these days is that action comics do tend to need superheroes in them.

"What I intend to do is basically take the Hitman character and involve him quite strongly in the DC Universe." Ennis has high hopes for the first storyline: "Hitman gets paid to go into Arkham Asylum to do a contract on The Joker and various people. Of course, that way we can have Batman involved and so on. There will be a supernatural aspect to it as there'll be a bunch of demonic assassins who take a look at this guy Hitman and see him as their ideal agent on Earth. Meanwhile, there's another top secret CIA unit, and I quite fancy the idea, that they're a sort of unit who are particularly involved with superheroes. What I hope to do is have them as this shadowy organisation who have been engineering some of the big superhero events and, in fact, creating their own superheroes. This is a total example which probably won't turn out to be true, but say, for instance, that this CIA unit managed to engineer the 'Bloodlines' creatures and thereby create their own superheroes and so on. That's the type of thing I'd like to do with Hitman: look at the shadowy world that would go on behind a world of superhumans."

Hitman draws heavily on the likes of John Woo and Quentin Tarantino. Ennis is particularly impressed by Tarantino, while McCrea's love for Woo could be discerned from graffiti backgrounds in *The Demon*. "There's nothing like having some sort of huge, appalling, bloody gunfight where about twenty guys are mown down in full gory detail. You can't beat that kind of thing for a morning's entertainment. We'll definitely be getting into that as much as possible."

Ennis also admits to being influenced by shady gangster movies like *Goodfellas*, *State of Grace* and *Miller's Crossing* which feature strong Irish-American characteristics which can also be found in the Hitman and the Constantine-goes-to-New-York episodes of *Hellblazer*. "I like doing that. I like the way that these movies show very strongly how these various people that go to America do keep a very strong sense of their original nationality."

Work is still progressing on *Goddess*, which Ennis mentioned in his last *CW* interview *[way back in #20 - Steve]*. "It's still being drawn. The artwork's being drawn by Phil Winslade, who I'm convinced will still make a big splash when it comes out. It's gorgeous artwork, very meticulous, very fine, beautifully thought out. The downside of this artwork is that it does take a very long time to finish, but as far as I know the end is in sight. Phil's very nearly finished the last issue and he's going to go back and colour a few of them." *Goddess* is tentatively scheduled to come out in May or June. "The weird thing is that I wrote the original proposal about five years ago and the scripts were written about three or four years ago, so it's not exactly indicative of my writing as of this moment in time. I suppose *Preacher* and the other stuff I'm working on at the minute would be more for that."

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE HAVING SOME SORT OF HUGE, APPALLING, BLOODY GUNFIGHT

Will Simpson is currently working on the *Legends of the Dark Knight* story Ennis also mentioned previously. However, the *Bloody Mary* project with Carlos Ezquerra which Ennis waxed so enthusiastically about will now not appear through Dark Horse, but will probably surface as part of Stuart Moore's next SF line for DC.

Ennis has just finished a nine-part Judge Dredd story for *2000AD* with artist Nick Percival. 'Goodnight Kiss' is the long-awaited follow-up to Ennis' first Johnny Kiss story which appeared absolutely ages ago. "It's much nicer to write Dredd when you feel like it rather than week in, week out, which is bound to tell eventually. 'Goodnight Kiss' is a big, violent epic set out in the Cursed Earth; lots of violence, lots of Dredd at his absolutely most lethal and dangerous, doing dreadful things to people. It's got a nice apocalyptic feel to it. I wanted to get away from the Mega-City One stuff." With a bit of luck, Ennis will also be doing a *Legends of the Law* series with artist John Higgins for DC's Dredd line.

Ennis has his fingers crossed for a proposal for a four-issue mini-series, *Pride and Joy*, which Vertigo are currently looking at. While this autumn will see the publication of *Heartland* - a special one-off which will focus on Kit from *Hellblazer* which is once again drawn by Steve Dillon. "*Heartland* us about Constantine's girlfriend living in Belfast on her own, not with Constantine in it. We're both very fond of the character so we thought we'd take her back to Belfast and see what would happen to her there." CW

STEPHEN JEWELL's most recent feature for CW was an interview with Peter Milligan in #34, if you don't count the Charlie Adlard interview earlier this issue...

Terminal

FLASH REACHES #100
AND THE END
OF TERMINAL VELOCITY.
WHAT CAN HAPPEN NEXT?
ASKS JACK CURTIN

Who would have thought that nice

Flash © DC Comics

FLASH

Velocity

FLASH

held that job over the years. In many ways, it's like a relay race and, eventually, the time comes to pass the baton to the next runner."

So somebody will be Flash come February. But who? Let's count the suspects.

Start with Wally: Is he really, really gone? "No one," Waid says firmly, "has ever returned after being absorbed by the Speed Force - not even Barry Allen. No one."

Okay, what about Impulse? Wally's major activity since *Zero Hour* has been trying to train the kid to take over the job. Is Bart ready for the responsibility? On a more practical level, since Impulse is about to get his own title, could he be the new Flash? "There are always ways around that kind of conflict, if you're clever enough," hedges Waid. After all, Superman and The Man of Steel are the same guy.

Jesse Quick? Even if she was set up as a straw man - er, woman - by Wally to try and inspire Impulse, she just might have the right stuff. Then again, she's been badly wounded in the leg. "Hey, this is comics. People come back from the dead. They certainly can recover from a gunshot wound," notes Waid.

Jay Garrick, the original Flash? (The original Green Lantern, Allan Scott, has regained his youth. Why not Jay?) How about Max Mercury? He could probably do the job, and he's been around so long, youth doesn't appear to be an issue. Johnny Quick is still out there somewhere, right? And the folks from Blue Trinity? Red Trinity? And then there's Lady Flash who - Waid promised a computer bulletin board inquisitor some months back - "will be returning to the book when the time is right."

Here's a wild thought: Could Linda herself be the new Flash? Might Wally have found some way to pass on his power to the love of his life before being absorbed by the Speed Force?

Waid just shrugs. He's not talking.

Well, not about the fate of Wally and the future Flash, at any rate. He's more than delighted to expound upon his treatment of the character and the long and complicated story he's done leading up to this dramatic turn of events.

"My concept of Wally West as Flash is that he is one of the very few heroes in the DC Universe who wakes up every morning and says to himself, 'Geez, I have a great job! I can't wait to go out there and be a super-hero today.' Wally loves being Flash. His entire personality is defined by his power. Wally is impatient, he lives to move forward and move fast. And Flash's power is one of the purest in comics. Everybody can identify with the ability to move faster than anyone else. Everybody can see the possibilities in that."

Waid's intent from the day he took over the title was to humanise Wally, to change him from "the womanizing cretin he was into someone I could like, someone I could write about comfortably. I wanted him to be a hero."

In Augustyn, he found an editor of a like mind. "Since Mark came on board, we have been working toward this point," Augustyn says, "though it's only fair to mention that the process of growing Wally up began while Bill Loebs was writing the book. When Mark took over, we did a 'Year One' storyline to establish a tone, then built to the 'Barry Allen/Professor Zoom' storyline to confront the whole issue of Wally's inferiority complex. We were always aiming toward the introduction of Impulse and the 'Terminal Velocity'.

"*Flash* has never been just about a guy who runs fast, it's about a guy who runs fast and is developing in all ways as a human being and as a hero. The story has been about the maturation of Wally West. He needed to discover who he was, to come out of the shadow of his predecessors and become *the* Flash. Until he reached that point, he wasn't ready to become a mentor. In a sense, we've been telling one long story about how Wally discovered that he was good enough to pass on what he had learned."

The key moment in all that was the Barry Allen storyline, says Waid. That epic was not, as fans expected, about Barry's return, but rather about Wally's freeing himself from the past. "One of the problems with *Flash* when I took over was that Wally was still in the shadow of Barry Allen, and that was the first thing I wanted to deal with. 'When are you going to bring Barry back?' was the first question asked whenever we talked to the fans. That had to end, and so we brought him back - in our own fashion. I guess the lesson here is 'be careful what you wish for'.

"Readers have to understand that Barry is gone; he's part of the Speed Force now - and, let me say again, no one has ever returned after being absorbed by the Speed Force."

Waid used the Barry Allen storyline to reintroduce several classic DC speedsters into Wally's life, including the enigmatic Max Mercury, whose origin was finally revealed in issue #97. "I always wanted to do something with the Quality Comics character, Quicksilver, even though I knew the name had been changed," he admits. "I loved the fact that we knew nothing about him, that he had no origin, that we didn't really know the full extent of his powers, his personal life - we never even saw him unmasked. He was a clean slate.

"The idea of time-shifting, of running through time, has been kicking around in my head for quite a while, so this was a chance to work it all out. I was talking to Brian and he came up with 'Zen Master of Speed' and that was it. The whole character just came to me in a thunderclap in that moment."

Max, of course, together with Jay Garrick, has been helping Wally teach Impulse the ropes of super-herodom. Since they're already on the scene as issue #100 approaches, they certainly have to be near the top of the list of candidates to take on the Flash mantle, don't they?

"Well, they are both fast enough," agrees Mark.

It wouldn't be fair to suddenly pull in somebody out of the blue to take over, would it?

"That certainly wouldn't be very nice," says Waid, ever so innocently.

Like I said, the guy's got a cruel streak. Who will wear the lightning? It all gets resolved in *Flash #100*. Long live the Flash, whoever he - or she - is. CW

JACK CURTIN is a freelance writer from Philadelphia, Pa., who has contributed to *Wizard, Previews* and *Comic Buyer's Guide*.

John Buscema talks to Alan Woolcombe

"I can't remember the past two or three books that I've done, I completely obliterate everything from my mind." Well, that sounds like a promising opening for a quick canter through anyone's career, let alone someone as legendary as Marvel mainstay John Buscema. Fortunately, the old-timer's long-term memory remains unimpaired. "My comics career started in April 1948 with Marvel, which was called Timely at the time. Stan Lee gave me my first job, on staff, for a salary of $75 a week, a hell of a lot of money in those days." It was like a dream come true for the young penciller: Marvel's staff artists all worked in one giant room, dubbed the bullpen. "What a roomful of talent! I was in another world when I saw those great comicbook men that I had grown up with, you know - Carl Burgos, Syd Shores, Danny DeCarlo, Mike Sekowsky... Absolutely fabulous!"

© Marvel Entertainment

This golden apprenticeship came to an abrupt halt in 1950, when Marvel laid off the staff artists overnight. "I was with Marvel, Timely, for about a year and a half, and then they put everyone out on freelance. I freelanced and then I started moving to other companies - I worked for several small outfits, but every one of them closed up like a domino effect." Buscema would draw anything: science fiction, western, crime, romance, classic and film adaptations - about the only genre he didn't tackle during this period was super-heroes. As the '50s wore on, times grew tough for the comics industry. "It was a bad period in comics - Marvel had just a few books each month and they had the guys working on them, DC told me they couldn't use me, as they had just enough work for the people that they employed."

In 1958 Buscema left the comics field and went into advertising. "I was fortunate in getting into a very large studio, loaded with talent, great illustrators. It was a wonderful period of my life - I learned how to paint. I did a lot of things: I did paperback covers, layouts, editorial illustration, textbook illustrations, all kinds of stuff. I enjoyed it a lot." Enjoyable as the work was, it was a very difficult life. "Advertising was a cyclical thing, where you worked maybe six or seven months and then you sat on your hands for the rest of the year. So those few months that you worked, you made a year's salary - but you were never home, you had to be available if a client approached the studio for a job. My son was born in 1964 - and for his first year I never saw him. I would get home and he would be asleep, I would leave and he would be asleep. The weekends would come around and I could go home, but I'd be working. It was a real cutthroat business."

On top of the hours at work, the Buscema family lived in the suburbs of Long Island (outside New York) and John faced six hours of commuting by train every day. He stuck it for six years until, just when they were contemplating moving closer to the city, he got a call from Marvel. "Stan [Lee] made me a fabulous offer - it was a very difficult decision to abandon my advertising clients, so I said "I will do the books - but I'm not going to leave my job." Anyway, I went into the comics and kept on commuting, but it was such a hassle. Finally I realized that Marvel were serious, they had plenty of work and I dropped the advertising. I've been happy ever since."

That was in 1966. Starting with a one-off Nick Fury/SHIELD story in *Strange Tales*, followed by a Hulk one, he soon landed a regular stint on the Avengers, written by Roy Thomas, his eventual collaborator on *Conan the Barbarian*. From there, it was but a short step to his most acclaimed series, the original Silver Surfer comic, written by Marvel supremo Stan Lee himself. "[The Avengers] was doing very well, and Stan came up with the idea of doing a large book on the *Silver Surfer*. Books were, I think, a dime [10c] at the time and this was a 25c book - which was outrageously expensive, but Stan said it would be successful. He took me off the *Avengers* and I started with the *Silver Surfer*. I enjoyed doing the Surfer because it had a hell of a lot of freedom, especially in the first couple of books. I did sixteen issues and Jack Kirby did the last one - Stan was trying to resuscitate the book, but the character was never popular with the public - I guess they weren't prepared for it at the time."

Since 1966, Buscema has only worked for Marvel. After the Surfer series finished, Buscema followed in the legendary Kirby's king-sized footsteps, taking on the Fantastic Four and Thor at the same time. These days he confines himself to chronicling Conan the Barbarian. So what keeps him at Marvel? "One of the things I have at Marvel is Conan, which I love. DC wanted me to work on Superman which I think is probably as dull as Spider-Man - I wouldn't be happy working on it. Also, the benefits that I have would be very difficult for another company to match, really. I've been at Marvel a long time and they've been very generous with me."

It's this mixture of extreme loyalty to the company (with Stan Lee, he wrote and drew *How To Draw Comics The Marvel Way*, one of the best comics primers ever, in print since 1976) and utter boredom with its chief products that renders a John Buscema interview different. What is it about Spider-Man (which he did layouts for,

JOHN

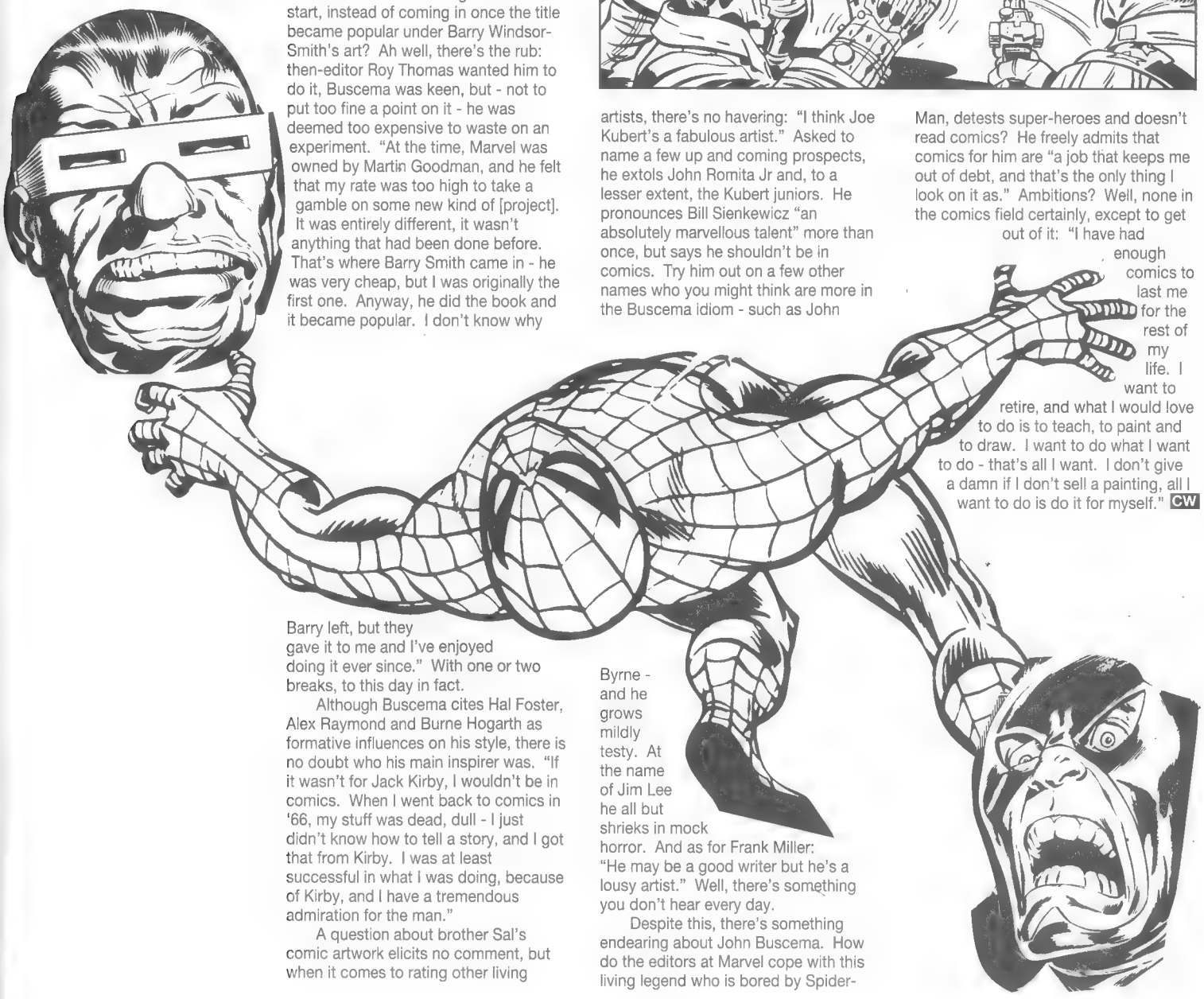
briefly) anyway? "I think it's dull, I don't like the character. Look, I feel that way about most super-heroes. The only one I have a bit of interest in - a bit - would be Thor because of Asgard. Whenever I did Thor and they had it on Asgard, I enjoyed doing it. They'd take him off Asgard and put him on Earth, I was bored to tears with it." Ulp - he was on Thor for years... Please don't tell me you hated doing the Avengers as well - one of those issues was one of the first comics I ever bought: "I hated it because they had so many goddamn characters running all over the place."

And Conan? "I love doing it." So how come he didn't pencil the barbarian's adventures right from the start, instead of coming in once the title became popular under Barry Windsor-Smith's art? Ah well, there's the rub: then-editor Roy Thomas wanted him to do it, Buscema was keen, but - not to put too fine a point on it - he was deemed too expensive to waste on an experiment. "At the time, Marvel was owned by Martin Goodman, and he felt that my rate was too high to take a gamble on some new kind of [project]. It was entirely different, it wasn't anything that had been done before. That's where Barry Smith came in - he was very cheap, but I was originally the first one. Anyway, he did the book and it became popular. I don't know why Barry left, but they gave it to me and I've enjoyed doing it ever since." With one or two breaks, to this day in fact.

Although Buscema cites Hal Foster, Alex Raymond and Burne Hogarth as formative influences on his style, there is no doubt who his main inspirer was. "If it wasn't for Jack Kirby, I wouldn't be in comics. When I went back to comics in '66, my stuff was dead, dull - I just didn't know how to tell a story, and I got that from Kirby. I was at least successful in what I was doing, because of Kirby, and I have a tremendous admiration for the man."

A question about brother Sal's comic artwork elicits no comment, but when it comes to rating other living artists, there's no havering: "I think Joe Kubert's a fabulous artist." Asked to name a few up and coming prospects, he extols John Romita Jr and, to a lesser extent, the Kubert juniors. He pronounces Bill Sienkewicz "an absolutely marvellous talent" more than once, but says he shouldn't be in comics. Try him out on a few other names who you might think are more in the Buscema idiom - such as John Byrne - and he grows mildly testy. At the name of Jim Lee he all but shrieks in mock horror. And as for Frank Miller: "He may be a good writer but he's a lousy artist." Well, there's something you don't hear every day.

Despite this, there's something endearing about John Buscema. How do the editors at Marvel cope with this living legend who is bored by Spider-Man, detests super-heroes and doesn't read comics? He freely admits that comics for him are "a job that keeps me out of debt, and that's the only thing I look on it as." Ambitions? Well, none in the comics field certainly, except to get out of it: "I have had enough comics to last me for the rest of my life. I want to retire, and what I would love to do is to teach, to paint and to draw. I want to do what I want to do - that's all I want. I don't give a damn if I don't sell a painting, all I want to do is do it for myself." CW



JUDGE DREDD HAS BEEN BRITAIN'S TOP COMIC STRIP CHARACTER FOR 18 YEARS. HERE WE TAKE AN ALL TOO BRIEF LOOK AT THE ORIGIN OF THE ONE-MAN JUDGE, JURY AND EXECUTIONER, AND SEE WHAT PLANS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR DREDD'S FUTURE

Past. Pre Fu

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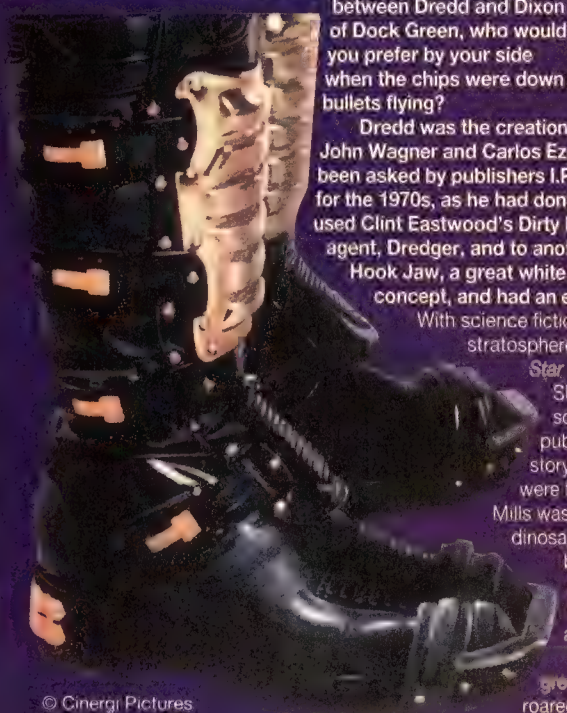
That Judge Dredd is the most famous character to come out of British comics since Dan Dare in the 1950s isn't in doubt. Why he should have been taken to the hearts of so many fans - now that's a different matter. A heartless, leather-clad, bike-riding executioner might not sound like the ideal role model, but given the choice between Dredd and Dixon of Dock Green, who would you prefer by your side when the chips were down and the bullets flying?



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Dredd was the creation of Pat Mills, John Wagner and Carlos Ezquerra. Mills had been asked by publishers I.P.C. to come up with a new comic for the 1970s, as he had done on two previous occasions. In one, *Action*, he had used Clint Eastwood's Dirty Harry as a character from which to cast his own rogue agent, Dredger, and to another film, Jaws, for inspiration when it came to create Hook Jaw, a great white shark with a taste for human flesh. He was into high-concept, and had an eye for popular genre films and stories.

With science fiction ever popular, and about to take another leap into the stratosphere with reports of an action packed space-opera called *Star Wars* about to hit the silver screen, Mills decided on an SF adventure comic, *2000AD*, creating various future scenarios: the Volgan 'Invasion' against Britain and the public execution of our Prime Minister heralded the first story in the first issue; future food shortages and time-travel were the premise behind the dinosaur-rampaging 'Flesh' - Mills was, if anything, ahead of his time with his love for dinosaurs!; the *Six Million Dollar Man* inspired 'M.A.C.H. 1', the biotronic man; and Dan Dare was revived as a hero for the seventies (and went down like a lead balloon with traditionalists. The younger fans didn't know any better and he lasted a couple of years).

But it was in issue 2 (March 5, 1977) that *2000AD*'s greatest success first busted some heads. Judge Dredd roared in on his Lawmaster bike, 4000 CC's of law

Carlos Dredd

The scene: a crowded bar, The Bedford Hotel. The action: an all too brief chat with Carlos Sanchez Ezquerra. I've run out of voice, having been talking and interviewing all weekend. Carlos and I had arranged something early Saturday and it's already late Sunday, and he's going to be heading for a plane in half and hour, so, armed with a glass of orange and a dictaphone, I croak my first question. The timer's running.

Spanish-born, Carlos began working in comics at around the age of 22 or 23 having served his time in the Spanish military where he met some artists who had explained how to get into comics. Always an avid and imaginative reader since his childhood, sat in a dusty corners of shops where you could hire comics and read the latest instalments of Rip Kirby, Prince Valiant or Juliet Jones.

enforcement (maximum speed: 570 kmph) to take out Whitey and his gang of Judge killers.

The idea for Dredd came from two separate stories. John Wagner, one of the top freelance writers at I.P.C. came up with the concept for a future cop who would be judge, jury and executioner rolled into one, ultra-trained, a near machine. Mills had earlier dreamed up the idea for an occult story which he was tentatively calling "Judge Dredd", but when the two writers sat down to discuss stories, they realised the title fitted Wagner's concept perfectly.

Mills did a second draft of the story, and passed it to Carlos Ezquerra. The initial visuals were incredible, growing from his initial idea for a biker on a Harley Davidson: Dredd's black leather and chains outfit was about to become the street wear of the punk movement, his face mostly hidden by a helmet that only allowed you to see the grim, down-turned mouth and chin. The character radiated menace and attitude.

Another of the early sketches showed some tall, mile-high sky-scrapers in the background, out of kilter with Mills' near-future New York, where the story was to be set. He asked Ezquerra to draw up a 'full page view of the city, and the results were equally astonishing: the high-rise skyline was filled with multi-level roadways, walkways and police scanners. Determined to use the piece as a pin-up, Mills took it to Doug Church, the visual designer on *2000AD*, who suggested that the cityscape was too huge and futuristic to be just New York alone - it should be expanded to take in the whole of the eastern seaboard of America, one vast Mega-City.

From the initial concept of a severe cop, Judge Dredd had taken on the aspects of a future saga: a leather-clad executioner in a Mega-city populated by 800 million people.

...sent...
...uture

...s Ezquerra: ...d's Co-Creator

Moving to Barcelona, Carlos began working via an agency for I.P.C., drawing romance comics. He moved to Croydon in 1971, ("for a couple of months. I lived there for nine, nine and a half years.") and in 1972 his first adventure strips could be found in D.C. Thomson's *Wizard* where he was drawing strips like "Chained to his Sword" and "Strongbow". His work was spotted by Pat Mills who contacted him and invited him to work on a new I.P.C. title, to be called *Battle Picture Weekly* for whom he created the 'Rat Pack' and 'Major Easy' - still one of Carlos' favourite characters.

Having already proved that he could create the grittiest war heroes, Mills invited him to turn his pen to SF when *2000AD* was being brainstormed in King's Reach Towers. Although his character designs were accepted, he wasn't the first artist to see his work in print: "I drew the first five episodes. Then I get very angry because the first one was one from Mike McMahon because mine weren't in his style."

Carlos would draw only two early episodes; his real bid to stamp his mark on the strip came in 1982 with the publication of 'The Apocalypse War', one of the key stories in Dredd continuity. Carlos' legendary speed and skill has made sure that he's been the artist of most of the key events in Dredd's life ever since, including 'Necropolis' in 1990, 'Judgement Day' in 1992, and the recent 'Wilderlands' saga (1994).

As well as creating countless characters, Carlos has also drawn some classics, the best-known being 'Stontium Dog', Johnny Alpha. "I've worked on Dredd for eighteen years, but for about nine years of that I was doing 'Strontium Dog', so for I've only really drawn Dredd practically for eight or nine years."

Originally created for *Starlord* in 1978, 'Strontium Dogs' was easily John Wagner's most powerful creation behind Dredd. Carlos produced some emotional and frantic action driven six month epics in the days when *2000AD* was at a peak: later stories by Alan Grant (solo or with Wagner) such as 'Portrait of a Mutant', 'Outlaw', the Max Bubba saga, and 'Bitch' were amongst the best stories published in the 1980s.

But all good thing come to an end...I say, to which Carlos groans: "I don't want to know anything about the death of Johnny Alpha! I refused to draw it. You cannot kill a guy who pays your wages for so long," and although he laughs, he's obviously bitterly disappointed. "I think that was quite a crazy idea. I said they should make Johnny Alpha disappear into space, that would be better than to kill him because to kill him when maybe one year after you want him in *Young Dredd* or you want to make him return...It's quite crazy. But anyway, that decision was editorial."

Carlos went on to create many other characters: "Maybe I am more creator than artist," he laughs. "I created Rat Pack, Major Eazy, The Stainless Steel Rat (based on the Harry Harrison novels), The Fiends of the Eastern Front by Gerry Finley-Day, Al's Baby, Third World War..."

The latter was Pat Mills foray into eco-war and -terrorism (the current *2000AD* star 'Finn' was a spin-off) for the adult comic *Crisis* which started strongly, but steadily lost readers is a maze of right-on storylines: "The thing with 'Third World War' was that it was too clearly political and too black and white, good and bad - and it was like everything was black with the world around you...even Hitler was good to his wife," Carlos laughs. "You cannot make such distinctions and I suppose it was one of the failures of 'Third World War'. Also I imagine that to put a black girl with left wing tendencies as the main character even in the eighties was a little too much because I got this kind of experience back in 1977: I created this character called El Mestizo for *Battle*. He was black and right in the middle of the American Civil War. He was quite a good character but I suppose he wasn't very successful because of his colour."

But Carlos' creation and continued activity on Dredd is still his greatest delight, very much the anti-hero, very much a bully boy...But, as Carlos explains, "Even then he has this humour, [he's] more like a caricature of

Judge Dredd © Fleetway Editions

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unemployment rife, and each one a potential criminal. The far future setting meant that the bank robbery, as depicted in the very first story drawn up by Ezquerra, was too mundane a crime for Mills' mind. Over the weekend Mills put together a tale about a killer who changes his face at a local genetic surgery parlour to escape identification, only to be trapped by Dredd when his voice is recorded and recognised by voice tapes. It was a good story, but not right to introduce the concept. For that Mills found a story submitted by another freelancer, Peter Harris, with the concept of Judge Killers. It focused on the Judge system perfectly, and became the first published story.

With *2000AD* safely launched, Mills handed it over to the editor, Kelvin Gosnell, but continued to write for the paper (as he still does). John Wagner went on to pen hundreds of Dredd tales, reworking concepts and honing the future that Dredd has inhabited for 18 years. The history of Joe Dredd has been filled with high-concept yarns: the Robot Wars, Dredd's trek across the Cursed Earth carry a vaccine from Mega-City Two across the atomic wastelands that surround Mega-City - filling in details of how the Judges came to power after the president had pressed the button and killed millions; The Judge Child Quest which sent Dredd across the galaxy; The Apocalypse War with its invasion by the East-Megs and the atomic death of half the citizens of Mega-City One; the more recent Necropolis and Judgement Day epics. All of them have compounded Dredd's popularity, and introduced some bizarre friends and enemies ranging from Walter the Wobot - a robot companion with a speech defect - to Judge Death, the spirit of an ex-Judge who believes that, as crime is only committed by live citizens, killing them would rid Mega-City One of all crime.

The future of Dredd is a bizarre place, filled with telepaths, psychos and mutants, a vast landscape from which to craft stories. Dredd has been the star of role-playing games, computer games, and nine novels have been added to his expanding canon. The graphic novel *Judgement on Gotham*, which co-starred another comic icon, Batman, sold over half a million copies.

The last words have to be left to Dredd himself: "The streets are crawlin' with scum. Everybody and his uncle's out there on the make. I handle a hundred serious crimes every day - ARVs to multiple homicide. And there's always a creep round the next corner waiting to bag himself a Judge...Enjoy it? Of course I enjoy it!"

So do his many thousands of fans. CW

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a lawman. He's more like a taxman than anything."

The latest epic was his first to use a new computer colouring system, although he has always coloured his own episodes. "You have to move with the times, and I imagine in five or ten years time that everybody will be doing the computer stuff because it's more clean and more easy and you can do exactly the same as you do with your hands. So I try: if I have to jump on the train better be the first one on or you can lose the train. It's still only six months since I've been using [it] and it's only now that I'm seeing how it's printed, and also I see no reference at all because I am the first one in England, so I was working blind. It's very expensive. This is the main problem." Added to which, he's teaching himself as he goes along:

"I had no idea what computer was before. Nothing. What is very frustrating, my two kids - one is nine, the other is eleven - they sit in front of the computer and they never read a single book about anything and they know how to use it! (laughs). They look like they are born now with this facility, so this is the reason why I started with computers before the next generation of British artists comes up. I thought I'd better be there first."

He's also currently working on various series for DC, the first recently released called *Bob the Galactic Bum*, also written by long-time collaborators, Wagner and Grant: "It's about a pair of galactic tramps. One, Bob, is very philosophical, and about fifty. I don't know exactly what it is, but I don't know whether he's very stupid or very intelligent. The only thing is that he has a very long nose and he can smell for miles and miles, and the guest in the series is Lobo." He's recently heard that he'll be drawing the adaptation of the movie, too.

So, life seems to be treating Carlos well. He lives in Andora, "a very small country and I am very, very wealthy living in Andora," draws, paints and colours strips for Britain and America, and can count himself as the creator of one of Britain' most famous characters. "One of the things I'm very proud of with Dredd is that it has seen several generations of British artists and I feel like a father," he says. "You feel more proud that you've been helping other artists as well." Time out.

Pete Taylor

Dredd: The Future

BOTH 2000AD AND THE JUDGE DREDD MEGAZINE ARE ABOUT TO UNDERGO SOME RADICAL CHANGES. STEVE HOLLAND SPOKE TO DAVID BISHOP AND STEVE MacMANUS TO GIVE YOU A SNEAK PREVIEW

Tharg's Nerve Centre has an air of expectation about it. The first floor of Egmont House is buzzing with determined activity. In his (latest) new office, Steve MacManus, mouse in hand, says: "Do you want to see what's going to be happening?" Nearby, the *Megazine* hotline has been ringing almost constantly for editor David Bishop. Has the news leaked that he's going to be commissioning new work soon?

Affectionately known as MAC-1, Steve MacManus has headed up the *2000AD* office since handing over the task of editing *2000* way back in the Winter of 1986, almost half the titles life ago. Now, here is is pushing the title back into the shape it was in those glory days.

We jaw about the Spring promotion, which will see the return of Rogue Trooper, Armoured Gideon, Finn and Harlem Heroes (see News, this issue) and stories that will take *2000AD* up to the summer (highlights include the return of Jonni Kiss to Dredd, Luke Kirby, 'Future King' by Mark Eyles and

Mark Hadley (a follow-up to 1992's 'Wireheads'), and a stunning fully painted run of 'Stronts' by Peter Hogan and Mark Harrison.

"That takes you up to the end of an era," he says. "With Prog 950 the idea is to get the spine of the comic right. Slaine and Rogue Trooper running almost week in, week out. It's so frustrating: you get Slaine, he comes along for 10 episodes and you think 'This is great,' and he's gone for a year. I'm sure the guy sells copies so he should be in it every week. So that's the idea, to give *2000AD* a spine again. Either side of that we can run new stuff."

From Prog 950, as well as the philosophical change, there's a physical change as well: "We're going to 40 plus 4, so we're going up by 8 pages, permanently, so that allows us to run six stories now, rather than 5. You can see that Dredd goes all the way through and Slaine goes all the way through. For the 12 week period of the movie we're going to double our Dredd. Up here," pointing to the unbroken line that stretches across the computer screen, "John Wagner is writing one-off strips, whilst down here we're going to be imitating the movie: Pat Mills is going to write a 4-part Rico story and a 4-part A.B.C. Wardroids story, and to give us 12 issues there's a 4-part Chopper story. Hopefully the movie will cause people to sample it.

"Mambo's going to be coming back in number 1, we're toying with an idea for a video game strip. Originally it was going to be the Judge Dredd video game but that might change now. Our plans are still rough at the moment. But by next Autumn we'll have Slaine by Dermot Power and A.B.C. Warriors will be back."

The basic change seems to be to give the title more continuity. "Yes, absolutely," agrees Steve. "But still, in between the three continuous ones, new stories coming and going. In 25 words: in Prog 950/1 we're looking for continuity with our three most popular characters. For twelve weeks we double our Dredd, and then see where we are." I can see you're counting already.

MEGAZINE

"I think the *Megazine* in 1993 had two or three good long series, and an awful lot of bitsy stuff for better or for worse - well, for worse mostly," says David Bishop. "Every single issue was something new. It was like the worse days of *Toxic!* And the title was really inconsistent, bitsy, and promptly won the Best Ongoing Publication, and thoroughly did not deserve to do so at all!

"That was what last year was all about, an attempt to get that almost repertory cast of characters that we ran and ran, 'Missionary Man' for ten issues, a couple of issue gap and another four issues. We ran Anderson eleven issues straight through. It's just to try and build up more of that consistency and that feeling that you know roughly what you're going to get, but can still be surprised every now and then. So the *Megazine* is going to try to continue along those lines. When we launched nearly five years ago every single strip was Dredd except 'Young Death' which is very nearly a Dredd strip. 'America' had a very strong Dredd presence throughout at the launch and we diversified from there. To a degree that's what we're going back to for volume three, when we relaunch at #1 (which would have been vol 2 #84), with an Anderson strip which Dredd co-stars in for three issues, there's Dredd one-offs, there's a Dredd series in mono and the lead Dredd strip as well; there's a lot of Dredd presence throughout, so anyone who wants to pick up an issue and read some Dredd they won't be short of it. It's not just 'Here's your 8 or 9 pages of Dredd, and here's 28 other pages of strip which have got nothing to do with Dredd whatsoever,' which is a

Charles Lippincott

AS THE COUNTDOWN TO THE DREDD MOVIE CONTINUES, JOHN MOSBY TALKS TO THE MOVIE'S PRODUCER, CHARLES LIPPINCOTT

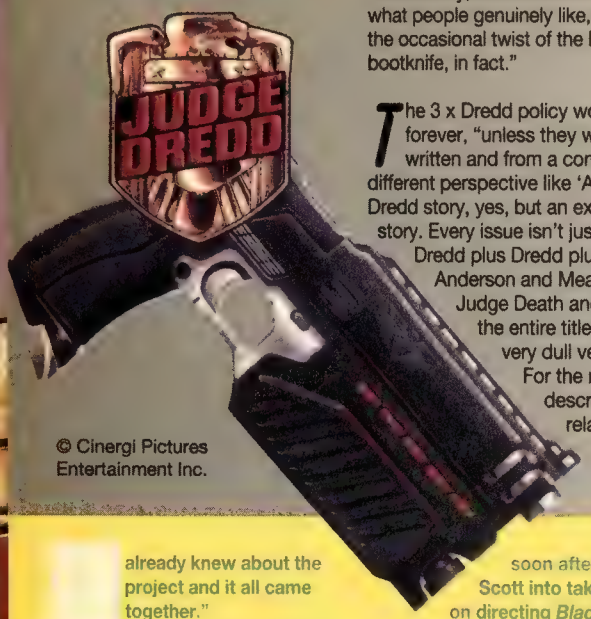
Forget nice little words like 'Executive' or 'Associate'...when you want to know the real facts behind a movie you go to the main honcho, the big cheese - the 'no-prefix' Producer.

In the case of *Judge Dredd*, the man in question is Charles Lippincott, a man who has a C.V. which could be mistaken as a list of Hollywood's most successful movies. He's also a man who's followed Dredd's adventures from almost day one.

"I first ran across *2000AD* in the Fall of 1977 in 'Dark They Were And Golden Eyed' whilst I was marketing *Star Wars*," he recalls. "By 1978 I had left Lucasfilm and Forbidden Planet had opened. I became friendly with the manager and started picking up the comic regularly. Brian Bolland had just started and they were doing 'The Cursed Earth'. That really knocked me out, the graphics, the whole idea; in 1980 I decided I was going to go after it. It took me about three years to get the property.

But, hold on...that's around 1983, over a whole decade ago. So why has there been such a delay?

"Several reasons. The first reason it didn't go a few years later was *RoboCop*. Basically *RoboCop* was a rip-off of Judge Dredd. Actually, I know the writers, and they made me a character in the TV show! The other reason was that *Dredd* was a very big science fiction movie and expensive SF movies rarely get made by just a studio: You need outside money, some capital and a star. Another major star, in theory, wanted to do it, but it really came down to the fact that (Executive Producer) Andy Vanja was looking for a property for Sly Stallone. That was what enabled the project to begin. Andy Vanja was approached about two years ago. Sly



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valid criticism of some of the strips that we've run in the *Megazine*. I think, more consistency, and more Dredd, more of what people genuinely like, and hopefully the occasional twist of the knife. The bootknife, in fact."

The 3 x Dredd policy won't run forever, "unless they were very well written and from a completely different perspective like 'America' - a Dredd story, yes, but an exceptional story. Every issue isn't just going to be Dredd plus Dredd plus Dredd, plus Anderson and Mean Machine or Judge Death and that's it for the entire title; it would get very dull very quickly." For the moment he's describing the relaunch not so much as back to basics as back to "'pure Dredd'. New, improved pure Dredd, in fact.

"I was looking forward to finally going to issue 100, finally. But no! Now I have to wait another four years. But that's life.

"The lead strip is called 'The Three Amigos' by John Wagner and Trevor Hairsine, and I cannot reveal the identity of the other two amigos - Dredd is one of them, but fans will enjoy this one because this is going to be the titanic team-up you've always wanted to see. Because you demanded it. Well, you didn't realise you'd demanded it, but if you'd thought of it, you would have demanded it. It's bloody funny, and features President Clinten Box, a mutant whose head is shaped like a cube who bears a remarkable resemblance to President Clinton. Just because really....Wagner really seems to have it in for Clinten and is giving him some stick at the moment.

"The other Dredd series that starts in that issue is called 'Fetish' written by John Smith, but it has nothing to do with sexual fetishes - I'd like to point out quickly! That's right, no sex! Oh, alright, not too much sex. That's all about a series of very bizarre murders that get investigated that all get related back to a Pan-African artefact - hence the fetish in the title. That's by John Smith and Ashley Wood in glorious black & white for five parts and then it will become a colour strip, so it will have a couple of issues break and then comes back as the issue's lead colour strip where Dredd goes to Pan-Africa and teams up with a character who has been sadly missed from the *Megazine* for the past year and a half. The third Dredd will be a series of one-offs in black and white.

"The two colour strips...well, the one everyone will be gagging for when they see it is Anderson: Satan, by Alan Grant and Arthur Ranson, and that's when Satan comes back to Earth for the first time in 10,000 years and decides to beat the living shit out of everybody. Mega-City One ends up sending Anderson out as their champion, and Alan hasn't decided how he's going to get around this - he hasn't decided how he can kill Satan in a really convincing manner, and he's come up with two alternatives for finishing the story: one of them will have everybody in tears or popping around to lynch me, so I'm kind of hoping he'll go for the second option myself.

The other strip will be Missionary Man by Gordon Rennie and sundry artists including Dean Ormston, allegedly." CW

already knew about the project and it all came together."

So, exactly what is Charles' job on the movie? After all, there seem to be a million and one kind of producers nowadays...

"A producer in the old sense was somebody who usually worked for a studio and oversaw a project. Nowadays there are Financial Producers - Andy Vanja is the man of the moment in that realm, producing really big projects. There are creative producers, technical producers, line producers. My role is not so much in production management: it's the marketing, the licensing. Because it's such a large production, it becomes a project where decisions are made ahead of time. A lot of things have to be decided before the cameras even start to roll."

Lippincott already had a strong reputation for rock 'n' roll movies through the seventies, though he admits that now he's best known for his influence in the SF and fantasy genre. The film which ear-marked him for that was *Star Wars*.

"My first job involving SF was as a publicist on a film made in England in 1970 called *No Blade of Grass*. I went to school with Gary Kurtz and George Lucas; they didn't go to school together, but I went to school with each of them. I was working for Alfred Hitchcock and we were all on the Universal lot. They were preparing *Star Wars* and I had talked to George and said what a good idea I though it was. I had helped put together the visual package that sold Warner Bros on *THX-1138* for George. Up until then I'd been working for Hitchcock, but George asked me if I wanted to read the script. I really wanted to do it. The next week, George and I stood in the lobby and talked for hours."

He found himself in charge of Advertising and Publicity. Needless to say, history shows he made a pretty good job of it! He then went to work of *Alien* and soon after talked Ridley Scott into taking a chance on directing *Bladerunner*. Not particularly afraid of those ties, he's happy to continue to be associated with SF: "I love science fiction. There's more science fiction that I want to do."

He has several irons in the fire, some of which he won't give away too much, but they include book adaptations and possibly an adult animated SF feature which he hopes would reach a wider and more diverse audience than the *manga*-based *Akira*.

Thankfully, *Judge Dredd* won't be one of those movies released in America months before it's released here. "It's July 4th in the States and July 21st in Britain," he explains. "I thought we might be able to come our D&D (same Day and Date), but Guild (who are releasing the film) don't want to do it. I've set up some stuff while I've been in England and I hop it will make people realise how great Dredd is in the British culture. I grew up in a small farm town, but I had relatives in England who sent me copies of *Eagle* with Dan Dare, so I really have a fondness for British comics."

He does admit, however, that despite the wealth of comic material being optioned, it might not end up in a tidal wave of decent movies:

"I don't think that a lot of them will be very good films. Marvel are still trying to make a decent feature. I don't think a lot of comic book material is good film material, although I've seen the reverse in what has happened over at Dark Horse - taking film material and making comic books, which I think they've done a rather good job of.

And so, the *Dredd* dreadnought trundles on. There's still a few months to go for fans. For people like Charles Lippincott, however, there probably won't be enough hours in the day to fit everything in.

DREDD TELECARD COMPETITION

In the highly competitive world of telecard collecting, the Judge Dredd Telecards are going to be classics. 18 cards are being released by P & J Promotions over a period of 24 months, each limited to a run of 1,500 cards issued in a signed folder. What's unique about these cards is that, together, they tell a story of the Dark Judges and Mean Machine, written by Dredd's co-creator, John Wagner, and with fully painted artwork by Kev Walker.

This unique telecard set will debut soon, and we've ten signed copies of the first card to give away in an equally unique birthday competition.

It's well known that interviews are a special opportunity to put your foot right in it. Usually we edit the more outrageous statements out, but for one month only here's a chance to see if you can spot the genuine statements, pulled completely out of context, made by David Bishop during the above interview.

Just list the letters corresponding to the genuine quotes on a postcard and send them by March 17 to ***'Bishop Gaffs', Comic World, Castle House, 97 High Street, Colchester CO1 1TH.***

A "I didn't realise Justice Department issue underwear was black!"
B "It gives us an opportunity to rip off *manga* comics and Frank Miller simultaneously."
C "Aiko Inaba, the only female Judge in Hondo City...if you don't count the female Hondo City Judge who turns up in *2000*."
D "I haven't read any of these strips really."
E "Dredd is going to take his trousers off and shag everything in sight."
F "Whip me, chain me, beat me."
G "He walks like a man, and likes men a lot..."
H "There's a good libellous story about that."
I "If you're 29 and been reading Dredd since you were 7 and you're 25 now - your age has just plunged by four years, a remarkable feat!"
J "Not provisionally. It will be...almost certainly."

For more details about Dredd Telecards send an SAE to P & J Promotions, PO Box 23, Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5EG

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

ALAN WOOLLCOMBE AND STEVE HOLLAND GET TO GRIPS WITH THE CAST AND CREW OF THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN RADIO SHOW

Photo: Tim Quinn

Anita Dobson getting carried away

I just seen The Green Goblin and Spider-Man sitting together on a coach chewing over last night's football results. Hey, call the *Daily Bugle!*

We're at The Soundhouse, a recording studio in Hammersmith - it's petite, functional, and to a novice it's a bit of a surprise if the only recording studios you've seen are in rock videos. No ten foot wide mixing and lighting desks, which is the nearest I've ever got to the music industry...hitting the lights ("as many as you can, as often as you can") for Bucks Fizz's closing number at the Brighton Centre, many, many years ago. So I've had a weird past. So what?

Today, The Soundhouse is home for the cast of Radio One's *Amazing Spider-Man*, taping episodes 31 through 40. Charged up with cups of coffee and catching a few words with Spider-Man - the other Spider-Man, hanging around for a photo-shoot, not radio Spider-Man William Dufris...it's all a bit surreal. Director Dirk Maggs calls for a crowd scene and everyone squeezes into a glass booth the size of a small greenhouse. Calling for quiet, Dirk runs through the scene: Aunt May and Peter Parker are arriving home when a bandit robs a local liquor store; bundling Aunt May (Buffy Davis) inside, Peter's wondering where the hell he can change into his costume when a fiery streak lights up the sky. Johnny Storm, the Human Torch, arrives, lays out the crook, and is surrounded by admirers.

Take One: In front of me is the guy doing the effects, playing a sythesised fight like Richard Clayderman on speed, trading punches from one end of the keyboard to the other. The bad guy takes a killer upper-cut to the jaw and flies back, his body thuds to the ground, and...

Somebody mentions that Johnny hasn't "flamed off". The crowd has raced in to get his autograph and the best they can do a toast marshmallows.

Take Two: Eric Meyers as Johnny Storm snarls, "Flame off," and rocks back from the microphone as the fight ensues again. Back and forth, the sock to the chin...and the crowd moves in. "Okay, folks, show's over," drawls the hero of the minute, signing autographs. In the background Peter Parker mutters, "Signing autographs, already! What a bighead! Huh! I'm goin' inside before he gets elected President!"

Only this time we can't hear Peter's sarcastic riposte, so for Take Three, Dirk moves inside the greenhouse and conducts his cast like an orchestra, raising his hands to swell the noise of the crowd and cueing Johnny, Peter and some Snotnose Kid's lines. The latter is Buffy Davis again, taking time out from the more gentile Aunt May; in the crowd there's Reed Richards (Peter Marinker), Jonah Jameson (William Roberts), Prince Namor (Garrick Hagon), Flash Thompson (David Bannerman), The Thing (Gary Martin), Doctor Doom (Michael Roberts), Sue Storm (Lorelei King) and Liz Allan (Anita Dobson). It's a small cast and they double up as required.

Writer, director and producer, Dirk Maggs, is already a past master of superhero radio, having first adapted Superman on Radio Four six years ago. "The first thing I ever did was called *Superman on Trial* for Superman's 50th birthday," he says. "It was a sort of dramatised trial of Superman, which actually was just an excuse to do a documentary about his life and career.

"Then we did a series for Radio 4,

Spider-Man © Marvel Entertainment Inc.

Spider-Man and producer Dirk Maggs

The Adventures of Superman. That was about four years ago; we did two short series of that. They were put out at very late hours, and nobody really heard them, but it got some good feedback from people in the comics business."

The two shows have since been released on tape, although they had to wait some time. "The first thing I did that was released on tape was *Doomsday and Beyond*, which was released about a year and a half ago in 1993. It was a period when I didn't have a lot else on and, frankly, I had to think what my best chance was of doing something that would keep me in work. I put it to DC Comics that, as they were publishing the Doomsday saga, we could actually do a radio version with the return of Superman and so on. They said yeah and we did it for Radio 5.

"Then last year, Radio 1 were talking about doing new material and I suggested we did *Batman: Knightfall* in the same way that we did Doomsday and Matthew Bannister *[Controller of Radio 1]* was very interested. The next thing we knew we had a commission to do 65 episodes of *Batman: Knightfall* to begin in April 1994.

"This time it was three minutes a day, which I hadn't done before - I had usually worked in half hours or quarter hours, so three minutes a day was a real learning curve! If you didn't know the *Knightfall story*, I think it was quite hard to follow. In the first half hour we had to cover two years' worth of storyline in all four Batman titles, so that was hard."

But successful enough to spawn another sequel in the shape of *The Amazing Spider-Man*, which has had a longer gestation period than most people will realise.

"Tim Quinn had thought well ahead of anybody and had approached Radio 1 before Matthew Bannister even arrived," recalls Maggs. Quinn was in for a bit of a surprise when, instead of a Marvel character, Radio 1 had turned Batman into a radio star. "'Hey your doing Batman,' mimes Maggs, 'But I rang about Spider-Man ages ago!' So I rang him back and said 'Well, let's get together and talk about Spidey,' because I always loved the character. To cut a long story short...we did Spidey."

SPIDEY

Tim Quinn was also the key to one other member of the Spider-crew: Brian May of Queen had expressed an interest some time before in updating the old Spider-Man theme tune; the old sixties TV theme was sounding a bit dated now and May has provided a new, chart-worthy sound track. May was also the link to another cast member, Anita Dobson, who plays Peter Parker's girlfriend Liz Allen, who recalls:

"As they *[Dirk and Brian]* were in thee early stages of discussing it, Dirk sneakily said, 'I don't suppose Anita would be interested in doing one of the voices, would she?' and Brian said, 'I'm sure she would!' And I was, so that's how I came on board.

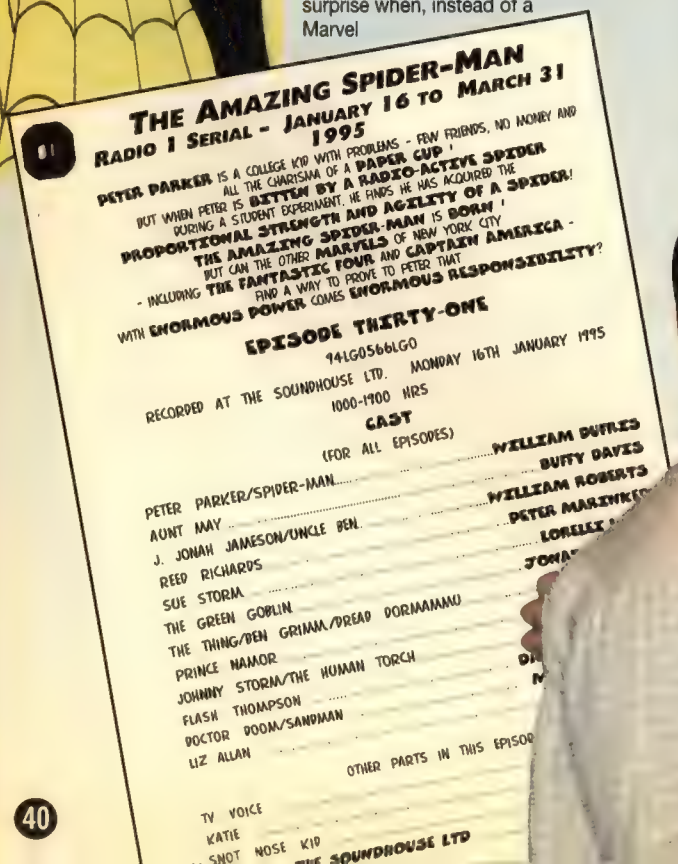
"And I'm very glad I did because it's a terrific cast and a really good atmosphere. Entering the world of comics was a real buzz for me; I've already said to our great director, Dirk, that I'm up for anything. I just want to pitch in there and do as much as I can."

That enthusiasm is reflected by the rest of the cast and everyone else involved. Tim Quinn is down to marshal some publicity shots of Anita and Spider-Man (yeah, I know he's just an actor in a costume, but in costume he has a certain lithe grace that makes you wonder just whether he could climb a wall. Even my imagination stops at spinning a web), and Tim's full of praise for the production.

"What we've done is go right back to Stan Lee's original stories from the first few years of Marvel in the sixties," he enthuses. In writing the show, Dirk Maggs was able to call on his experiences of penning earlier adaptations:

"I wrote and adapted the previous material from DC by default, really. I found that, the more I did it, the more I was learning about how to make audio sound like a movie soundtrack. I've always had a feeling that, if you switch the sound off on a movie, you lose nine-tenths of it. We could supply nine-tenths of a movie - and maybe with a bit of effort the other tenth - as an audio-movie. The Supermans were kind of working our way up, Batman last year with three minutes a day had a real punchy, dynamic feel, and the Spider-Mans have been even more so.

"The thing about the Spider-Mans is that we were able to go back to the original Stan Lee/Steve Ditko stories. '90s storytelling (Dan Jurgens' Superman stuff or the stuff Denny O'Neil was editing on Knightfall by Doug Moench, Chuck Dixon, etc) is



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
RADIO 1 SERIAL - JANUARY 16 TO MARCH 31 1995

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BUT CAN THE OTHER MARVELS OF NEW YORK CITY - INCLUDING THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND CAPTAIN AMERICA - FIND A WAY TO PROVE TO PETER THAT WITH ENORMOUS POWER COMES ENORMOUS RESPONSIBILITY?

EPISODE THIRTY-ONE

94LG056bLG0

RECORDED AT THE SOUNDHOUSE LTD. MONDAY 16TH JANUARY 1995
1000-1900 HRS

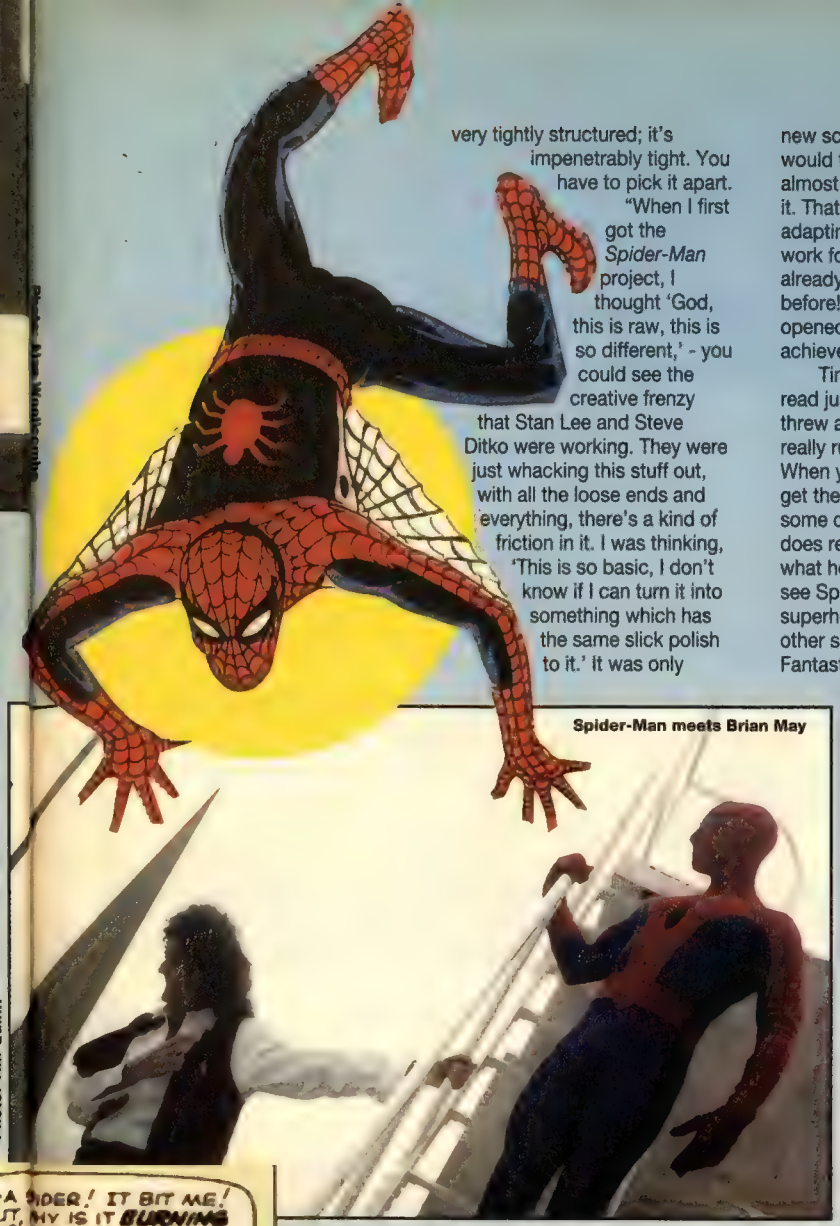
CAST
(FOR ALL EPISODES)

PETER PARKER/SPIDER-MAN ..... WILLIAM DUFRIS
AUNT MAY ..... BUFFY DAVIS
J. JONAH JAMESON/UNCLE BEN ..... WILLIAM ROBERTS
REED RICHARDS ..... PETER MARINK[illegible]
SUE STORM ..... LORELLE [illegible]
THE GREEN GOBLIN ..... JONA[illegible]
THE THING/BEN GRIMM/DREAD DORMAMMU ..... [illegible]
PRINCE NAMOR ..... [illegible]
JOHNNY STORM/THE HUMAN TORCH ..... [illegible]
FLASH THOMPSON ..... [illegible]
DOCTOR DOOM/SANDMAN ..... [illegible]
LIZ ALLAN ..... [illegible]

OTHER PARTS IN THIS EPISOD[illegible]

TV VOICE ..... [illegible]
KATIE ..... [illegible]
SNOT NOSE KID ..... [illegible]
THE SOUNDHOUSE LTD ..... [illegible]

Photos: Tim Quinn



Spider-Man meets Brian May

very tightly structured; it's impenetrably tight. You have to pick it apart.

"When I first got the *Spider-Man* project, I thought 'God, this is raw, this is so different,' - you could see the creative frenzy that Stan Lee and Steve Ditko were working. They were just whacking this stuff out, with all the loose ends and everything, there's a kind of friction in it. I was thinking, 'This is so basic, I don't know if I can turn it into something which has the same slick polish to it.' it was only when I really started writing the scripts that I suddenly realised (and I know this will sound stupid!) what a genius Stan Lee was.

"You can say that the guy was a genius for inventing these characters and so on, but you can go into another level entirely when you're actually working with his lego set. You realise how clever he was and how many ideas came off him, like sparks off a wheel, and that was the great thing.

"Quite often when I'm doing these, I'm writing around situations in such a way that I can still do action sequences but you are imagining them visually. Obviously, where the comics do something totally visual we have to find a way to describe that without saying [slow motion voice] 'Hey-he's-getting-a-gun-out-and-shooting-it-at-me.' The Stan Lee stuff was very interesting: whereas with DC I always write entirely new scenes, I would be writing on *Spider-Man* what I thought were entirely new scenes and three episodes later would find out that Stan Lee had done almost the same thing in order to explain it. That was the weird part, that I was adapting around the story to make it work for radio, and then find he had already done it! The guy had been there before! That was the thing that really opened my eyes to what he had achieved."

Tim Quinn takes up the tale: "Dirk read just about every Marvel comic out, threw all the ideas up into the air, and has really run with them in a 1990s way. When you listen to the series you don't get the feeling that you're listening to some classic sixties thing. However, it does retell the origin of Spider-Man, and what he's done particularly well is that we see Spider-Man growing as a superhero through the eyes of other superheroes such as The Fantastic Four. Spider-Man starts off as a bookworm, a teenager who has all these problems, and through the series he grows to become, and recognise himself as, a superhero.

"In the series we meet such characters as Flash Thompson, Liz Allen, Aunt May, Betty Brant, Jonah Jameson; on the villain's side we meet Doctor Doom, Sandman, the Dread Dormammu, the Green Goblin, Doctor Octopus - who has to be heard to be believed. Alongside them we've got The Fantastic Four who, I think, are portrayed brilliantly: they are the Fantastic Four, simple as that.

"The storyline takes us from the offices of the *Daily Bugle*, Peter Parker's home with his Aunt May and Uncle Ben, to the Baxter Building and...oh, I didn't mention that the Sub-Mariner also has a major role in this - we end up in Atlantis, and in Bavaria with Doctor Doom, o we get about the whole world. A lot of storylines."

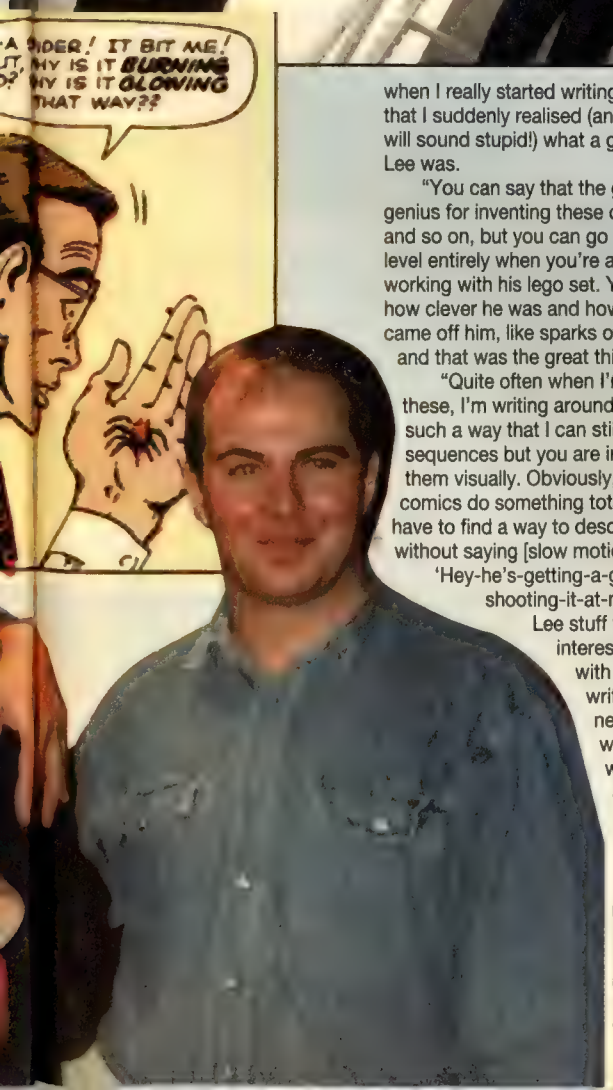
Coming up with the adaptation took...? "I started work on the first script in the middle of November, and I finished the last ones yesterday, so it's almost exactly two months," says Maggs. The casual way he says 'finished the last ones' is the graceful, swan-like disguise to the frantic beatings that go on under the surface, as, according to Tim: "Dirk phoned me up at the weekend to say that he's got this problem: he's only got ten episodes left to tie all the loose ends up. He rang again later to say he'd got a bigger problem: now he'd only got two episodes left, and in Episode 48 Peter Parker has been practically reduced to a vegetable by Doctor Doom who has convinced him that he's completely useless, that nobody believes in him, everybody hates him, he's loathed...and Dirk has two episodes to clear that up. Six minutes."

Yeah, and as this is a cliff-hanger serial I'm not about to let the cat out of the bag as to whether he recovers his composure or not.

If, like me, you're a working lad and rarely tuned into the radio at 4.20 for Mark Goodier, the two and a half hour Spidey show is going to be available from March 6 on tape and CD; pick it up and you'll be able to hear what all that fighting above was all about. As Tim Quinn says: "I think everybody that you could possibly want to be in there is in there. I think it comes as a shock every time you tune in to find another character popping up, and it works so well; you almost know who they are before their name is mentioned. The sound effects are amazing for this series. I can't believe the sound that Reed Richards makes when he stretches from one end of the room to the other. It's extraordinary."

Of course, the one question everybody wants to ask is: just how do you know that Invisible Girl is invisible? According to Lorelei King, it's down to audio magic: "We have really fantastic, space-age technology at our fingertips, so when I'm invisible I talk into a drinking glass!" And turning invisible? "I think we've got this disgusting wet, rubber-glove sound on disk. It sounds like you should see my innards."

You have to hear it to believe it. CW



Left to Right: Eric Meyers, Peter Marinker, Spider-Man, Lorelei King and Gary Martin
Photo: Alan Woollcombe

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6	Leia on Endor	38	Mon Calamari	70	Ewok
7	Han on Hoth	39	The Emperor	71	Engineer
8	Vader on Death Star	40	Admiral Ackbar	72	Male Minor Jedi
9	Darth Vader	41	Quarren	73	Female Gambler
10	General Veers	42	Greebo	74	Kid
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12	Revel Scout (bins)	44	Gamorrean guard axe level	76	Wicket
13	Stormtrooper – outstretched pistol	45	Gamorrean guard axe high	77	Nien Nunb
14	Stormtrooper – walking firing gun	46	Bossk	78	Royal Guard Weapon Rt. Hand
15	Stormtrooper – firing gun left	47	Bobba Fett	79	Royal Guard Weapon Lt. Hand
16	Stormtrooper – kneeling gun (relaxed)	48	IG88	80	Cantina Band Member
17	Stormtrooper – kneeling firing gun	49	Garindan	81	Cantina Band Leader
18	Stormtrooper – running	50	Wee Quay	82	Bartender
19	Stormtrooper – walking left	51	Tusken Raider	83	Kabe
20	Stormtrooper – Tatooine	52	Ren Gar	84	Scout Trooper
21	Stormtrooper – big gun (rest)	53	Lando in Armor	85	Rebel Trooper - Large Gun
22	Stormtrooper – fire left	54	Nikto	86	Rebel Trooper - Firing Left Shoulder
23	Stormtrooper – big gun (firing)	55	Ithorian	87	Rebel Trooper - Poncho Pistol Right
24	Stormtrooper – gun lowered	56	Kerry	88	Rebel Trooper - Poncho Pistol Left
25	Stormtrooper – firing pistol	57	Muftak	89	Rebel Trooper - Arm Outstretched Pistol
26	Stormtrooper – gun resting middle	58	Sivrak	90	Rebel Trooper - Two Hands on Gun
27	Death Star Trooper	59	Female rebel merc	91	Rebel Trooper - Crouched Machine Gun
28	Death Star Gunner	60	Tie Fighter pilot	92	Rebel Trooper - female arm outstretched
29	Snowtrooper	61	Labria	93	Rebel Trooper - Rifle at Port
30	Hoth Rebel	62	Hem Dazon	94	Rebel Trooper - Pistol Behind Head
31	Jawa	63	Bib Fortuna		
32	Leia on Bespin	64	Elephant Mon		

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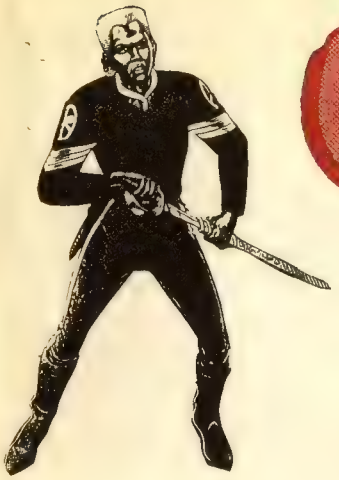

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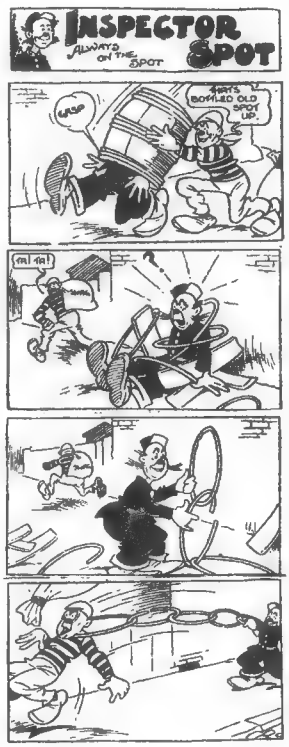
End of Winter Mega Sale

Who's Who IN BRITISH COMICS

ADKINS, FREDERICK (THOMAS) (1894-1986). Born on December 7, 1894, Frederick Adkins was a prolific funnies artist for the Amalgamated Press between 1917 and 1956, when he retired. As well as numerous original strips he was also a prolific duplicator of other artists' work; his later work appeared mostly in nursery comics. Described as a tall, lean man, he lived in later life in Leigh-on-Sea, and died on December 31, 1986, at the age of 92. [WL/SH]
>>"Freddie Adkins Chronology" by Denis Gifford (in Comic Cuts 60, Jan 1984)

Stripography

Nougat the Nig (in *Funny Wonder*, 1917)
Inspector Spot (in *Butterfly*, 1917?)
Forkes the Floor Walker (in *Funny Wonder*, 1919)
I. Mitt (in *Funny Wonder*, 1920)
Spick and Span (in *Comic Life*, 1920)
Olaf Harty (in *Comic Life*, 1920)
Ford Carling (in *Comic Life*, 1920)
R. Dupp (in *Jolly Jester*, 1920)
Tinkle the Tec (in *Lot o'Fun*, 1920)
Tom Thump & Knockout Ned (in *Lot o'Fun*, 1920)
Breezy Ben Bold (in *Comic Life*, 1921)
Sammy Sample (in *Lot o'Fun*, 1921)
Dickie & Darkie (in *Lot o'Fun*, 1921)
Ferdie the Film Filbert (in *Lot o'Fun*, 1921)
Jnky the Printers Imp (in *Comic Life*, 1922)
Reggie Rambler (in *Jolly Jester*, 1922)
Alec Allsports (in *Lot o'Fun*, 1923)
Quip & Crank (in *Comic Life*, 1925)
Bob Breezy (in *Comic Life*, 1925)
Will Willing (in *Comic Life*, 1925)
Three Jolly Soldier Boys (in *Playbox*, 1925)
Professor Botany (in *Sunbeam*, 1925)
Ossy and Pelly (in *Comic Life*, 1926)
Roly and Poly (in *Comic Life*, 1926)
Peter Peppercorn (in *Playbox*, 1927)
Penguin Isle (in *Comic Life*, 1927)
Danny and Domino (in *Funny Wonder*, 1927)
Spick & Span (in *Monster Comic*, 1928)
Sonny of Sunshine Farm (in *My Favourite*, 1928)
The Chicklets (in *Playbox*, 1928)



Inspector Spot (Butterfly, 1917). Art by Freddie Adkins

Danny and Domino (Funny Wonder, 1917). Art by Freddie Adkins

Tot, Tiny & Tim (in *Merry & Bright*, 1931)
Who's Who in Jim's Zoo (in *Merry & Bright*, 1931)
Bobby Blue (in *Tiger Tim*, 1931-37)
Timothy Topknot (in *Tiger Tim*, 1931)
Scamp (in *Playbox*, 1934)
The Jolly Jimps (in *Playbox*, 1934)
Bimbo the Clown (in *Tiger Tim*, 1938)
Flips (in *Playbox*, 1939-55)
Dickie Duffer (in *Chips*, 1941?. Duplication for Albert Pease)
Mississippi Max (in *Wonder*, 1942)
Buzz Buzz the Bully Wasp (in *Wonder*, 1942)
Our Dolliwogs (in *Tiny Tots*, 1956)

ADLARD, CHARLIE (1966-). Born in Shrewsbury on August 4, 1966, and educated at Shrewsbury Public School. Studied Film and Video at Maidstone College of Art where he gained a BA. Came to London where he worked in a variety of brain-dead jobs, including sales assistant at British Home Stores, whilst drumming in various bands (such as Wild Thyme, although with no rock star aspirations, and most recently with Bogus Monk, with slightly more aspirations). Took up comics again after moving back to Shrewsbury and produced various short running strips in collaboration with Tim QUINN. His break came at the Glasgow Comic Art Convention in 1990 when he approached Steve MacMANUS with samples and was offered a Judge Dredd strip. He has subsequently drawn strips for the *Judge Dredd Megazine*, notably the "Armitage" series about a brutal Brit-Cit cop and his partner, Treasure Steel (who subsequently appeared in her own series), and for Marvel UK for whom he drew various titles listed below and the unpublished Bloodrush mini-series by Simon JOWETT. A prolific artist, he has subsequently worked extensively in the USA for Marvel, Defiant and Topps. In April 1994 he completed work on a graphic novel by Doris Lessing which has yet to see print. Currently he is working extensively with Keith Giffen on various projects for Marvel and Image which should see print in 1995, and the ongoing *X-Files* for Topps. [SH]
>>"Charlie Adlard" by Steve Holland (in Comic World #17, Jun 1993), "Opening the X-Files" by Stephen Jewell (*Comic World #37*, Mar 1995)

Stripography

Biggles Bear (in *Hot Air*, 1989, by Tim Quinn)
Katman (in *People Magazine*, 12 Nov 1989-6 May 1990, by Tim Quinn)
How to Become a Pop Star (in *No.1 Magazine*, 1990, by Tim Quinn)
Channel 20 (in *No.1 Magazine*, 1990-91, by Tim Quinn)
Judge Dredd: The Hand of Fate (in *Judge Dredd Megazine 18*, Mar 1991, by Alan Grant)
Armitage (by David Stone):
Influencial Circles (in *Judge Dredd Megazine 10-18*, 5 Sep-26 Dec 1992)
Flashback (in *Judge Dredd Megazine 19-21*, 9 Jan-6 Feb 1993)
Flashback 2 (in *Judge Dredd Megazine 31-33*, 26 Jun-24 Jul 1993)
Crab's Fury (in *Crab's Fury*, Nov 1992, by Guy N. Smith)
Warheads:
Questions and Answers (in *Overkill 21*, 29 Jan 1993, by Warwick Gray. Inks by Adolfo Buylla; reprinted in *Warheads 9*, Feb 1993)
Black Dawn (in *Warheads: Black Dawn 1-2*, Jul-Aug 1993, by Craig Houston)
Hershey/Steel: Degenomancer (in *Judge Dredd Megazine 35-36*, 21 Aug-4 Sep 1993, by David Stone)
Dances With Demons (in *Dances With Demons 1-4*, Sep-Dec 1993, by Simon Jowett)
Black Orchid: The Wiles of Junkin Buckley (in *Black Orchid Annual 1*, Oct 1993, by Dick Foreman)
Scarlet Witch (in *Marvel Comics Presents 144-145*, 1993, by Cefn Ridout)
Dark Dominion (in *Dark Dominion 4*, Jan 1994, by Janet Jackson. Inks by Keith S. Wilson)
Good Guys (in *Good Guys 3*, Jan 1994, by Jim Shooter/ Janet Jackson. Inks by Charles Yoakum)
Mars Attacks (in *Mars Attacks 1-5*, 1994, by Keith Giffen; reprinted as graphic novel with some additional pages, Topps, Dec 1994)
Lunatik (in *Marvel Comics Presents 173-175*, early Feb-Mar 1995, by Keith Giffen & Lovern Kindzerski. Inks only)
X-Files (based on the tv series, in *X-Files 1*-ongoing, Jan 1995-present, by Stefan Petrucha)
Black Widow & Night Raven (in *Black Widow & Night Raven*, forthcoming, 1995, by Cefn Ridout)
Supreme (in *Supreme Annual 1*, forthcoming, 1995, by Keith Giffen. Inks only)

Judge Dredd Megazine. Cover by Charlie Adlard

Dances with Demons. Art by Charlie Adlard

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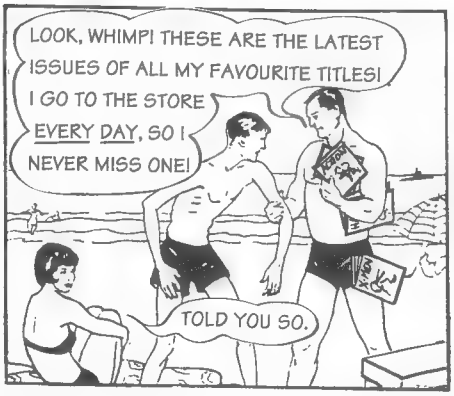

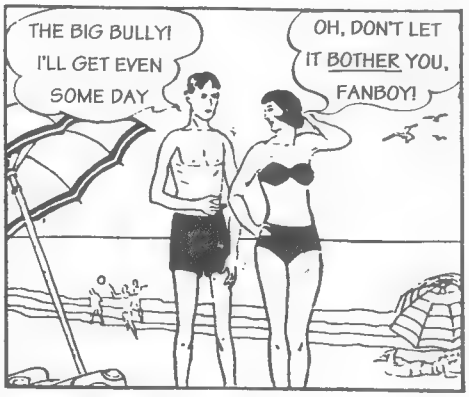

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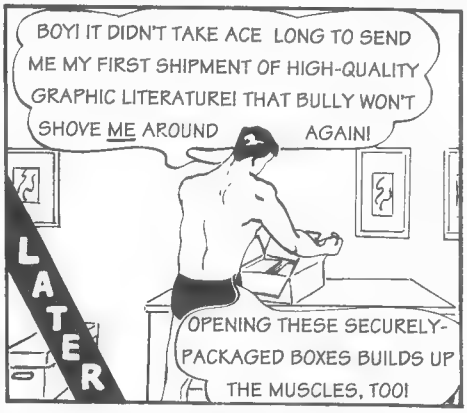
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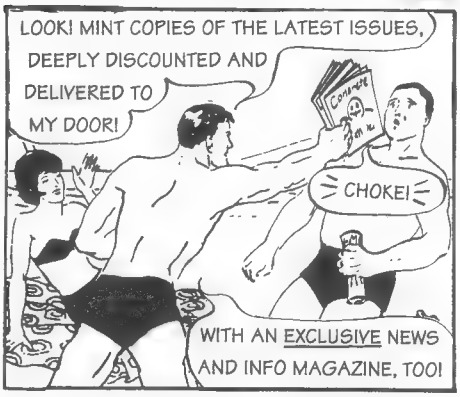
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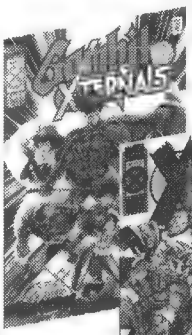
Richard Hill's REVIEWS

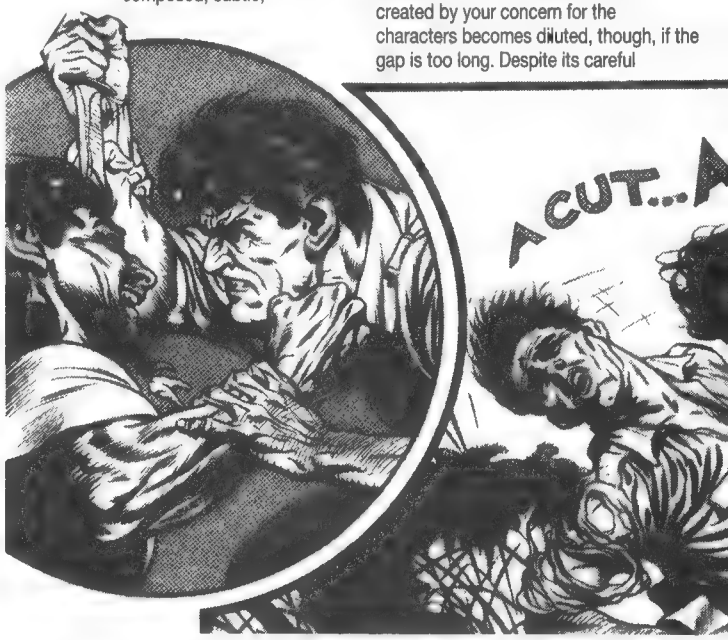
We've a column of starkly contrasting approaches to comics this month, with both sides relying heavily on the letter 'X'. The X-Universe, with its dozens of pages a month seeing print, undergoes a complete unheaval, while a more subtle transformation continues in **Xenozoic Tales #13** (Kitchen Sink, $2.95). Mark Schultz's dinosaur-infested epic makes a reappearance after (*choke*) two years, with another twenty pages of the main story for you to devour in minutes. And as usual, few shops will order it in any significant quantity and you may not have noticed it's even appeared.

To keep a book with such a leisurely frequency and small circulation, Schultz and his publisher have had to engage in some canny deals to license the characters to other media. The franchise is called *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs* and it appears in TV cartoons, computer games and, most bizarrely, comics published by another company and written by Roy Thomas. The money Schultz makes from these makes it easier for him to do the book the way he wants to - slowly.



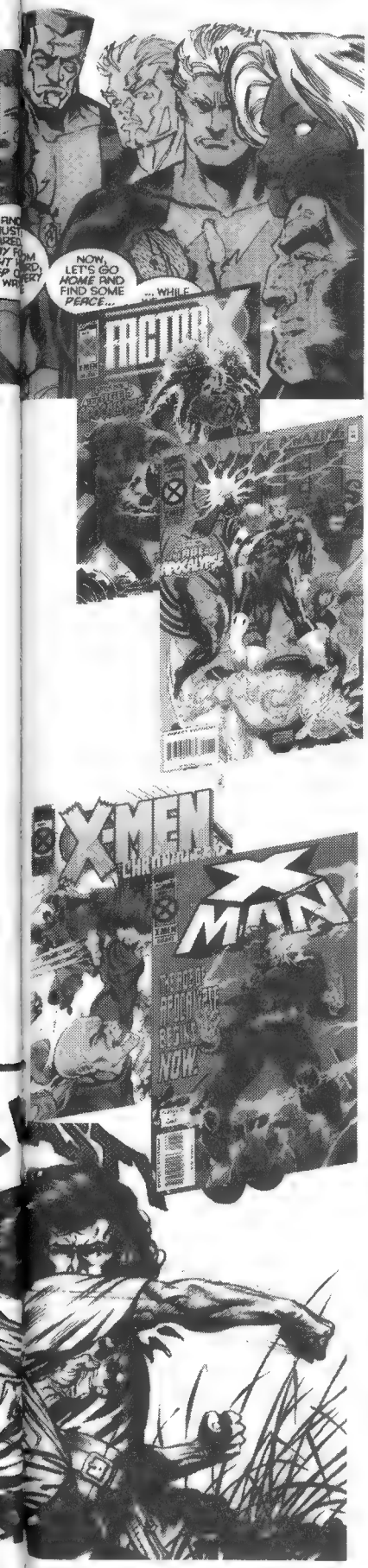
The result is gorgeous. From the vivid cover, almost as intense as a silkscreen print, to the tasteful design on interior text pages, the package reeks class. But all this is mere wrapping paper to showcase Schultz's breathtaking art - composed, subtle, organic...black & white and proud of it. The illustrations, whether using carefully-observed people or wildly-imagined creatures, show that few artists can conjure up so convincing a world. The story, full of quiet humour and darkly-plotted politics, sweeps you away in just as natural a manner. Unlike the art, the characters are not black & white. Theirs is a world of difficult moral decisions.

This delicate story is harmed by the same lack of deadline pressure that makes the art so immaculate. One of the strengths of the comic is its periodic nature - the way it, like a soap opera, keeps you in suspense, hanging on impatiently for the next chapter. We've all had the feeling of not being able to wait a whole month to find out what happens next. The tension within you created by your concern for the characters becomes diluted, though, if the gap is too long. Despite its careful



construction and its artful complexity, *Xenozoic Tales* is a tale taking so long to tell it's difficult to remain passionate about it.

A lack of pages is something the X-Men comics suffer from. In their biggest crossover to date, all eight titles are uniting their plotlines to give you the best part of 200 pages a month to chew over. And we're dining on no less an occasion than the end of the universe.



The conceit at the heart of the story is that it's possible to travel back in time and change events that have already happened. With one man's premature death in the past, the present is changed beyond recognition, and the writers have a new set of building blocks to play with. In **X-Men #41** (Marvel, $1.95), we watch the Marvel Universe shatter into millions of crystal shards.

With the X-Men's two most potent symbols, Xavier and Magneto, at the heart of this story, it cannot help but have a momentum and significance that many *X-Men* plots couldn't match. We have seen these men battle for many years, each for their own vision of the way the world should be. A crucial turning point occurs when Xavier is struck by a psychic weapon.

The story shows the energy knife piercing Xavier's skull - we turn the page, desperate to see what happens next. There's a double page spread of adverts. 'Professor X Memorial Service at Another Universe'. 'The Death of Professor X' comics delivered to your door. And again we turn the page to see him die.

The most sublime piece of ad placement in many a year shows exactly why you will be moved to buy this tale of a world that never was. Not out of passion to discover the next development, but out of curiosity.

And I'll admit it - I'm curious. I bought **X-Men Alpha #1** (Marvel, $3.95), as you may have done, because I've known these characters over many years and I wanted to see how this drastic alteration of the status quo would affect them. How would the new relationships in this new world echo or contradict those of the old?

The answers within *Alpha* and its succeeding set of number one issues are disappointing, hinting at possibilities that could have revealed so much about the X-Men. Instead, as before, we see mutant against mutant, with only the line-up of the sides changing. We are essentially being presented with the same old mutant civil war.

Most of the characters here are exposed as redundant. The writers can do anything they like with them - have them fight for evil instead of good, love one man instead of another - and it tells us nothing about them. Over the past few years, the life has been stamped out of these people, until the nature of the ties between them doesn't matter any more. Jean Grey can be in love with scott in one reality and Logan in another, and it makes no meaningful difference to how she acts or feels.

When all this is over in a few months, the old universe will return in not too dissimilar a form. We'll see if Excalibur survives the imminent plane crash and how that huge battle between Wolverine and Sabretooth is resolved. But the excursion into what might have been will need more of a sense of purpose if it's to shed any light on the heart of the story - why things are as they are in the X-Men's real world.

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MARVEL COMICS

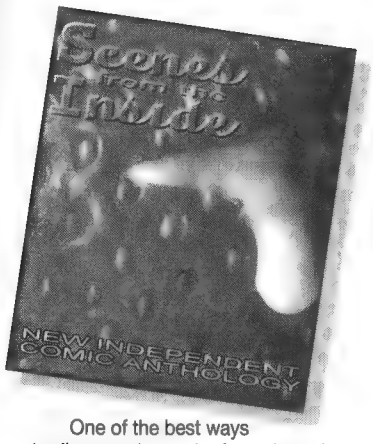
Steve Cook's SMALL PRESS

Happy birthday, Comic World! As this is the third anniversary issue, I thought I would do something different for a change. I've been writing this column for almost half of Comic World's life and I felt it would be fun to write an overview of the past year or so in small press. Also, I don't have many comics sitting on my desk waiting for review at present, so get those comics in to me folks. Meanwhile, here's the small press world.

It strikes me, looking back over my introductions to columns, that I've gone from extolling the virtues of small press to crowing about its rising prominence in the UK comics scene. I certainly feel that there is a thriving comics underground here, that is for the most part glossed over by the 'mainstream' comics industry. Of course, a good percentage of this is crap, a fair amount is passable and only a few small press comics truly shine - but examine the rest of the comics market. The same can be said for Marvel, DC, Image and the other big boys. There is an incredible wealth of energy and enthusiasm going into producing comics that in the main bring their creators very little money or recognition. You can change this! Buy a small press comic. If you like it, get your friends to buy it. Finally, write and let the creator know what you thought of it. Though I would like to thank everyone who has ever produced or read a small press comic, the rest of this month's column is about some people and organisations I would like to thank personally for their dedication to the art of small press comics over the last year or so.

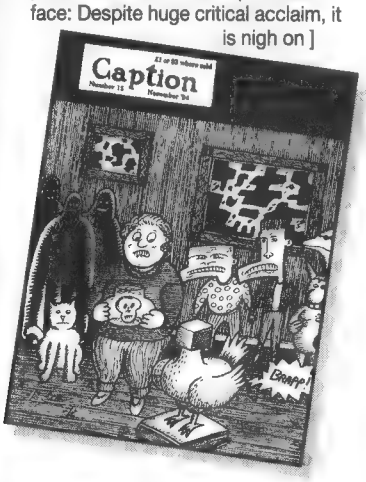
The London Cartoon Centre should be known by everyone reading this. As the only dedicated school for fledgling comic creators in the country, it should be feted by one and all as a starting point for those who will constitute the UK comics industry in years to come. In reality, it has had to contend with the recurring threat of closure due to lack of funding. The LCC puts out several small press anthologies each year, giving its students a chance to see their work in print, often for the first time. While they understood that not every student will produce a masterpiece, the staff are always encouraging and will have undoubtedly earned themselves a place in the hearts of many future professionals.

One of the greatest problems facing a self-publisher is how to get work to the largest possible audience. There have been several small press distributors in the past, but none have managed to achieve as much as Slab-O-Concrete. Since its inception about three years ago, Slab has managed to raise itself from total obscurity to being written up in major magazines. By returning all the profit in the promotion of small press, Slab has been able to expand into acting as a publisher for many cartoonists and production values have constantly risen. Their catalogues alone put many 'major' comic titles to shame as far as entertainment value is concerned. If you've never seen what they have to offer, then now is the time to send an A5 SAE to receive the latest catalogue of the finest small press goodies. **Send to Slab-O-Concrete, 18A York Road, Hove, West Sussex BN3 1DL.**



One of the best ways to discover the work of a variety of small press artists is through an anthology comic. Perhaps the finest of these at the moment is Scenes From the Inside. Having already proved itself a huge success in its home city of Bristol, Scenes now faces the difficult task of raising awareness throughout the rest of the country. By the time you read this the fourth issue will be out (review next month) and as it is now available through Titan Distributors, I would recommend that after sending for your own copy, you hassle your local comic shop to stock some copies so others can discover it. It is slightly pricy, but definitely worth the £2.75 from **Drat & Blast Books, Ground Floor Flat, 120 Ashley Road, Bristol.**

A fond farewell next, to Battleground - one of the most widely appreciated fanzines in recent years. Unfortunately it is now no more as Andy has come up against major hassles defending his home against the whims of the local council. This is an all too graphic depiction of the problems that most self-publishers face: Despite huge critical acclaim, it is nigh on]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SINCE 1966, FEW PEOPLE HAVE SEE
STAR TREK'S COMMUNICATIO
BUT, AS SHE REVEALS HERE TO

Bey
Uhu

Sometimes it's impossible to see behind that sheet of glass, beyond the lights and colours that weave and dance just behind the screen. That's the way the box was designed, patterns moving so swiftly and blending so easily that you, the viewer, are fooled into believing that what's happening on the screen is real and that the people it's happening to are real.

But it's not true. The camera does lie. It lies to us every time we switch on that magic box, because what you see isn't happening. The magic starts way behind the screens: behind and before the cameras that first pick up these images, that's where the magic starts. And who that camera is aimed at, they're the real people, transformed by, not magic, but good scriptwriting, directing and producing, into the characters you just want to reach out and touch.

Photo © Jim Meechan

Sometimes television can be so powerful it creates a screen image so strong that the actor or actress portraying the part gets lost in the mix: do you really see Adam West without the cowl and cape or Leonard Nimoy without the pointed ears and quizzical expression?

Or Lieutenant Uhura not at her station on the Enterprise? Because for many people Nichelle Nichols is Uhura. Oh, boy. Have the cameras been lying to you.

"That's really the reason why I wrote the book," says Nichelle. In Los Angeles it's raining - rain that will eventually become floods. It's not what I expected. Nor, maybe, is Nichelle's biography. "When I was asked to, I thought Well, what to write? I didn't want to write nor did I write a Star Trek book so I named the book Beyond Uhura. Who is this woman who's led a long and fruitful life? How did we get from there to here? I think it might serve as an inspiration to anyone who's reading, that when they see the finished product on the screen, and all the glamour and everything, there is much, much more that has gone into that person, and that Odyssey, that journey in Life that they've travelled, that brings the quality that you see on the screen."

In Beyond Uhuru, Nichelle has delved back into her days as a cabaret singer and dancer. Her singing career is something that seems to have come full circle, Nichelle still producing music and shows. "I never really stopped. People think that they're seeing a surprising new element of you when you perform in musicals or theatre or do something other than portray the character that they love and know so well. They think, 'Oh! She's doing this now!' and in fact they're very surprised when they find out that's what I did long before I became an astronaut on a television series."

Something I for one hadn't realised was her strong connections with and convictions for the US space programme: "I must say that my popularity as Uhura certainly fascinated them and was very beneficial in getting people to listen to me because it was 'Oh, what is Uhura having to say?'. When I objected that maybe people might not take me seriously, NASA said 'Not if they hear you speak for five minutes,' so I thought that I had a duty and a opportunity to open a door for women and minorities and to change the face of the astronaut corp, as Gene Roddenberry had changed the face of television forever.

"And it worked. It worked because I was very interested in the space program and was very serious about our presence in space as far as space research and development and industrialisation and I saw the benefits to humankind that we take for granted every day. I thought this is a major opportunity and important enough historically that I should take time off from my career, which I did for six months, to ensure women and minorities were sufficiently appraised of NASA's seriousness and the opportunity that was there for the first time in decades."

The Challenger disaster was a shocking blow to the heart for NASA: "I think America was so shaken because after twenty-five perfect space shuttle flights and missions we became perhaps a little too smug about it and became careless, and we had to realise that it is really very, very dangerous work and that the people who put their lives on the line are doing so for the benefit of humankind and for the scientific advancement that has benefited humankind. I think we also had to understand that those seven people would have given their lives in vain had we stopped the space program and there's too much to be gained to stop the program at that point because of one mistake. We learn from our mistakes and keep going. That's very important."

Perhaps, one day, we'll even see a Starfleet? "Absolutely!"

NICHELLE NICHOLS AS ANYTHING BUT OFFICER, LIEUTENANT UHURA. NEIL COOPER - THERE IS LIFE ...

ond

ra

Star Trek Photos © Paramount Pictures

BIOGRAPHIES

Quite a flurry of biographies have come out about Star Trek recently and particularly with the final, final, honest, this is it, movie just released. I ask Nichelle her thoughts...

"I think that some of the unauthorised biographies, as opposed to autobiographies, do little good in servicing Gene Roddenberry's great legacy of Star Trek, his legacy of peaceful exploration and I think a lot of people jumped on the bandwagon and though even a lot of good happened, I think there are people who would rather see the negatives than the positives.

"One of the major things [about writing Beyond Uhura] was trying to decide exactly what should go in and should not go in. One's life is simply not an open book, where you view everything. I think there are major events that happen in people's lives, both positive and negative, that can serve as inspiration to the reader - and if that is not the purpose then I don't think there is a value to it. Fortunately the wonderful letters that I've been getting and the long lines I've been signing at book signings hopefully show that I was on the right track!

Did you surprise yourself in any way?

"Yes, yes. There are areas of my life, especially my young life that I think you tuck away in your memory, but then, when you sit down to think about yourself and decide what works and why you want to write about it, you discover that not only had you tucked it away but have guarded yourself from those memories. I think we do that in order to grow and to handle life as it comes; you can't wallow in the bad experiences of your life and you can't live on past laurels because life is about the future from this moment following, so going back I found that I had to actually create a timeline from the moment that I was born and the events in my life along the way and then decide what was possibly interesting enough to be included in the book. No sooner had I done that then I realised one of the most interesting things about my life was before I was even born! My parents run-in with the Mob here, my grandparent's travail from the South as an interracial couple and their valiant courage and determination; I discovered for myself one of the areas that I got my stubborn courage from in life to keep going." I think I would have said 'inner strength' myself, I interject. "Tenacity," decides Nichelle, and laughs.

UHURA

"What's the most often repeated question I'm asked? 'What is your favourite episode?'; and I always respond 'Any time Uhura got to get off the bridge'."

So you're part of a landing party? But everybody used to get killed; everybody who wasn't main cast, you can almost just think Uh-oh, cannon fodder! "Yeah, you finally wind up saying 'Uh, wait a minute. Maybe it's better I stay up here and watch the ship!' One of the most charming things that ever happened was when I was at a signing and a little boy, about six-years-old, came up to the table and he took one look at me signing his picture and he looked at his mom and said 'Who's watching the ship?' I said 'Captain Kirk let me come down on shore leave, just so I could come down and see you,' and he looked at me and looked at his mom and said 'Oh.' I thought that was wonderful.

Nichelle' high spot on the series was, oddly, at one of her lowest moments when she was considering leaving the cast. "I think that being told by Dr. Martin Luther King that your presence and character were important in the historical scheme of things. Being prevailed upon not to leave the show by no less than Dr. Martin Luther King was possibly the turning point of my life. Working with wonderful people, the cast were just the best quality of people, Leonard Nimoy and DeForest Kelley and George Takei and Jimmy Doohan and so forth, they were and are very good friends of mine and very close people and I have the highest respect for them.

"The low points, as I've written about, was that in 1966 there was a great deal of resistance to people of colour on TV: being represented as anything other than menial tasks, as maids and butlers or the occasional tap dancer or musical person. I was the first, as Dr. King said, 'You must stay. Don't you realise you have the first non-stereotypical role on television, and it changes the face of television forever, because for the first time the world sees us as we should be seen, as equals and in this case, going in peaceful exploration across the universe. This is an image and a door that will not be closed. I found that such a compelling argument that although I had told Gene Roddenberry only the day before I wouldn't be staying on the show past the first year, when I returned to work on Monday, I told Gene I would stay and I'll never forget tears coming into this big, six foot three giant of a man, and Gene saying 'Bless that Dr. King. At least someone sees what I am trying to achieve'."

Of course, there's more to Nichelle

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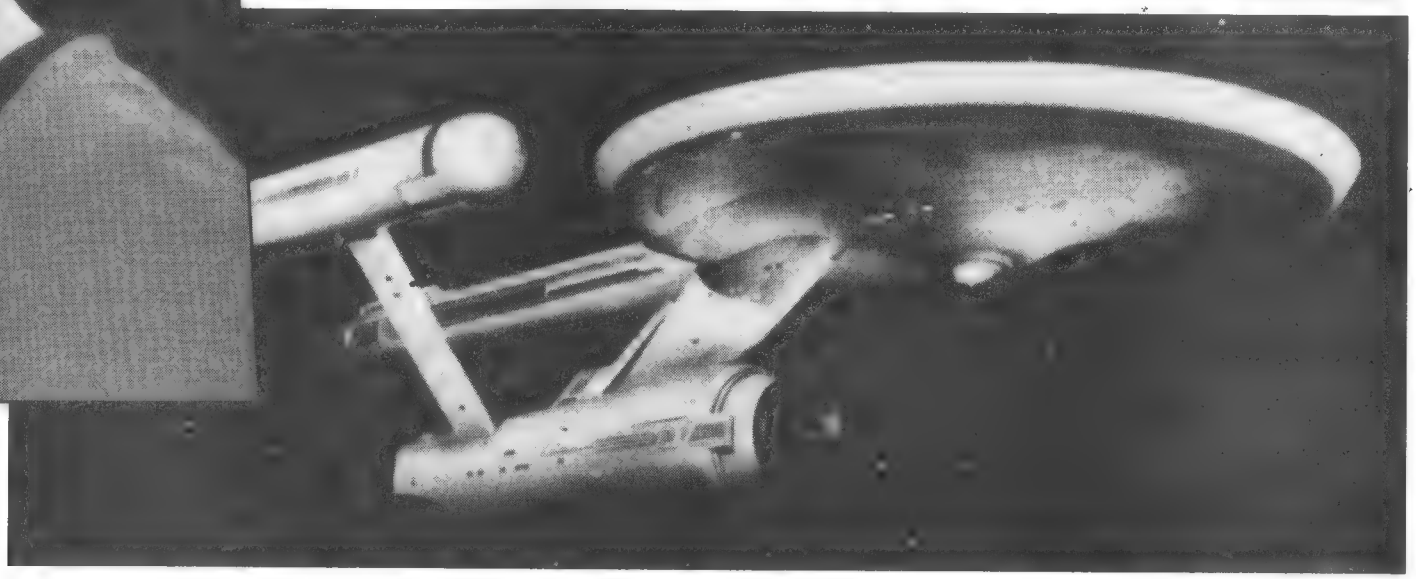

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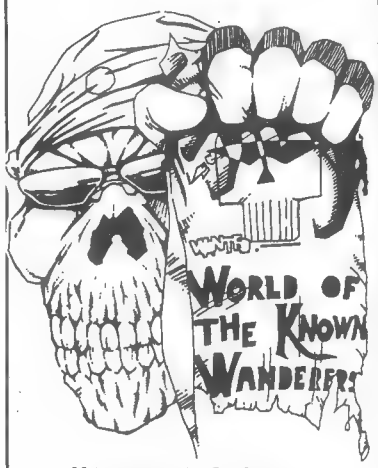

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Black, Sheila *Stargate.* Puffin, £3.99. Simplified version of the Dean Devlin/Roland Emmerich novelisation (below) with the addition of colour plates.

Devlin, Dean & Roland Emmerich *Stargate*. Signet, £4.99. Based on their own movie script, the novels fills out plenty of background and detail, and if the film seemed plotless, the book rolls along nicely.

Green, Simon R. *Deathstalker.* Gollancz, £5.99. A story in the *Star Wars* tradition: huge, sprawling adventure in a galaxy-spanning, evil Empire where thee Iron Bitch sits on the Iron Throne in the Imperial Palace of Golgotha. For not supporting her, Owen Deathstalker finds himself a fugitive, and in his escape from one end of the Galaxy to the other he uncovers a growing resistance to the evil Empress.

Haining, Peter (Ed.) *The Frankenstein Omnibus*. Orion, £5.99. 734-pages for six quid has to be value for money, and Haining has rescued some very obscure items here, from rare Mary Shelley short stories to a two-act play based on Frankenstein performed in 1823. Plenty of modern authors are represented too, from Arthur C. Clarke to Kurt Vonnegut.

Harman, Andrew *101 Damnations.* Legend, £4.99. Latest, Pratchett-like fantasy from the best-selling author of *The Frogs of War*, stacked with cringe-worthy one-liners and the occasional gag that will have you laughing out loud.

Holder, Nancy & Melanie Tem *Making Love.* Raven, £4.99. Erotic contemporary horror novel in which a forty-year-old prim schoolteacher, Charlotte Tobias, dreams up her perfect lover and names him Phanes, only to begin losing control of him and her desires.

Jacques, Brian *Mattimeo*. Legend, £4.99. Delightful and at times stirring story of mice and their battle with an evil fox, Slagar, who is intent on the destruction of Redwall Abbey and its inhabitants. Ranged against his cunning is the fearless mouse-warrior, Matthias, and his son, Mattimeo.

Jacques, Brian *Meriel of Redwall.* Legend, £4.99. First in the Redwall trilogy, followed by *Mossflower* and *Mattimeo* (above).

Lackey, Mercedes & Larry Dixon *The Black Gryphon*. Millennium, £4.99. First of a trilogy of stories set 1500 years before the adventures of Lackey's *Valdemar* series at a time of wizard, empaths, telepaths and healers. The forces of Urtho battle the evil Mage Maar.

CONTINUED PAGE 54

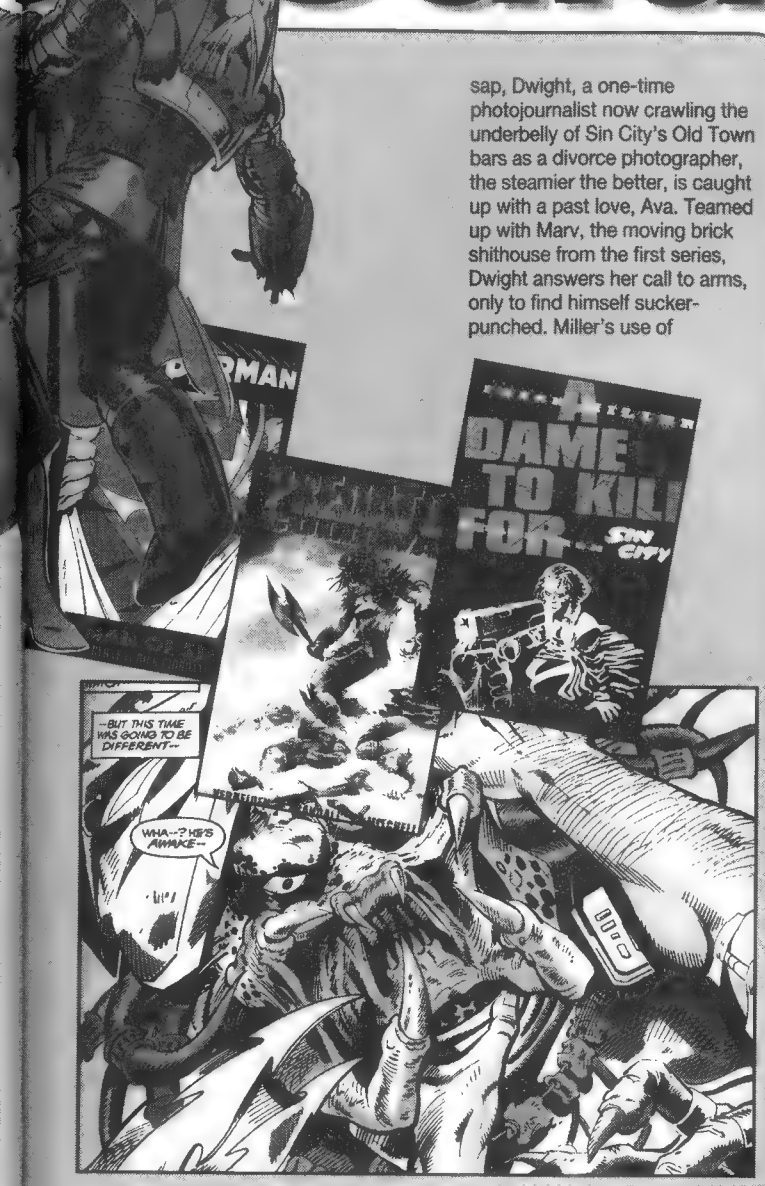
GRAPHIC NOVELS

Predator: Cold War, by Mark Verheiden, Ron Randall & Scott Mitchell (Titan, £8.99). High-speed 'Ruskies vs G.I. Joes' in the Siberian wastes, both chasing a Predator ship. Apart from the basic flaw - Predators hate the cold, and it's 70 below zero - Verheiden keeps the pace cracking and the artwork is good without being distinguished. The tired, laughable punch line is that the day is saved by a bare-chested, bare-handed New York Cop and a female Russian Army Lieutenant in a t-shirt with a big gun. So, nothing new, but a fun ride nonetheless.

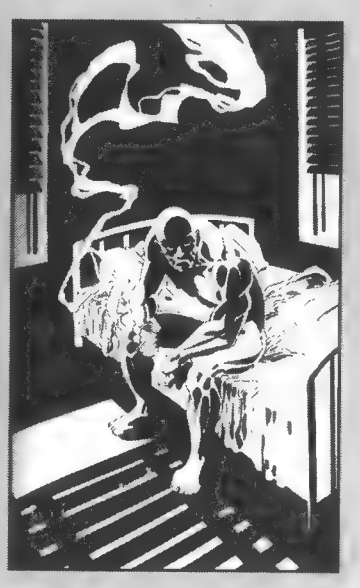
Sandman: Brief Lives, by Neil Gaiman, Jill Thomson & Vince Locke (Titan, £12.50). Delirium and Dream set out to find the missing member of the Endless clan, Destruction, who has abdicated his place and family responsibilities. This is one of Gaiman's most complete stories to date, resolving its own plot and many of the threads he'd previously left hanging. Jill Thomson's scrawny Sandman takes some getting used to, as does the multi-coloured rainbow speech of Delirium, but - as always - the book pays back careful attention in spades.

Sin City: A Dame to Kill For, by Frank Miller (Titan, £8.99). Miller's *noir* nightmare has all the elements of the best of *Black Mask*, Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler; this tale's sad

Media



sap, Dwight, a one-time photojournalist now crawling the underbelly of Sin City's Old Town bars as a divorce photographer, the steamier the better, is caught up with a past love, Ava. Teamed up with Marv, the moving brick shithouse from the first series, Dwight answers her call to arms, only to find himself sucker-punched. Miller's use of chiaroscuro - building shapes out of shadows and silhouettes - works perfectly on this, the darkest Sin City to date.



Superman: The Man of Steel, by John Byrne & Dick Giordano (Titan, £5.99). Classic Byrne retelling of *the* classic origin story. Byrne's 'Year One' doesn't depart radically from the traditional explosion on Krypton, but condenses his first encounters with the likes of Lex Luthor and Batman into six chapters, adding layers of perspective and stripping away the baggage that had built up around the character. It can't be any coincidence that the book revealing Clark Kent's origin is being made available just when Kent is about to die in DC continuity, and it's a welcome arrival, an important stepping stone in Superman's journey back to the forefront of comics in the 1980s.

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Multi Media CONTINUED

McCandless, David *The Trekmaster: Trek Trivia Quiz*. Boxtree, £4.99. Inexpensive and fun questions from classic *Trek to Deep Space 9*, movies, characters and actors. Some of the quote-type questions are good for a laugh even if you can't identify the speakers, but many are going to be way beyond the knowledge of casual fans.

Weinberg, Robert *A Modern Magician.* Raven, £4.99. Fantasy in the tradition of L. Sprague De Camp. Jack Collins answers a classified ad in the careers section and finds himself working with Merlin the Magician, battling the forces of darkness.

FILMS

Get ready for interactive films: not on your pokey little PC or by telephone vote, but at your local silver screen. Christopher Lloyd stars in *Mr Payback* which has hundreds of scene variations which viewers can vote to see thanks to Sony New Technologies and Interfilm. Several multiplexes in the USA have installed the system, which is controlled by viewers pressing buttons built into their seats.

Sylvester Stallone is so hot in the wake of recent successes and the predicted success of *Judge Dredd* that Savoy Pictures have offered him $20m and 20% of total worldwide box-office if revenues exceed $100m to star in an un-named 1996 film...that's some deal, and stars like Kevin Costner and Arnie Schwarzenegger are likely to want parity. With the average cost of a movie now up to $30m, and less than a third of the 170 major studio releases making a profit before heading overseas and onto video, that's an even more astonishing offer. Only 10 films crossed the $100m mark in the US in 1994, but worldwide that figure shoots up: a rough rule of thumb doubles the US domestic take for worldwide, and even Stallone's *The Specialist* has made $56 in the USA. That's money in the bank for both Stallone and Savoy, but nowhere near the profit of, say, *Pulp Fiction* which cost under $10m to make and has already grossed over $63 in the USA to date, and almost $100m worldwide.

Also in the wonderful world of money: Kevin Costner's *Waterworld* will need a domestic take in the region of ***Jurassic Park*** just to break even. The estimated cost is already $120m to $150m+ depending on whose figures you take. And Jan de Bont might be dropped from the *Godzilla* remake because he wants a budget of $130m. TriStar have pegged the figure at $100m.

Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt have been signed up to reprise their roles for **The Vampire Lestat**, the sequel to **Interview with the Vampire**, which may begin filming late this year...It seems that John Woo may be quitting *Tears of the Sun* which he was set to direct in Australia in favour of another Fox project,*Broken Arrow*...**Daredevil** has a new director in Carlo Carlei from a script by himself and Christopher Columbus, who seems to be set on **The Fantastic Four** now...Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio have written a script for a **Sandman** movie...Tommy Lee Jones is to star in **Men in Black**, based on the Eternity/Malibu comic which has Les Mayfield directing and Steven Spielberg co-producing for Amblin Entertainment...

Richie Rich, based on the long-running Harvey character, came out over the Christmas weekend in the USA and pulled in $5.8m against *Street Fighter's* $9.5. The latest figures available have Culkin at $33.3m and Van Damme at $29.5. Nowhere near as attractive as Jim Carrey, the star of 1994, whose *Dumb and Dumber* has topped the $100m mark already, nor even Van Damme's *TimeCop* which took $44.4m. The horror film **Demon Knight** is a spin-off from HBO's (cable) **Tales from the Crypt**, released here on video as *Vault of Horror* - both titles of old EC comics; the film has so far achieved a reasonable $14.7m take in 2 weeks.

Batman Forever has provisionally been given an August release date in Britain by Warner Bros. The set was remarkably quiet during filming, nowhere near the hubbub of *Judge Dredd* which Guild have already started promoting with a trailer before *StarGate* (excellent movie, by the way). *Batman* will find himself up against Kevin Costner's *Waterworld, Die Hard 3: With A Vengeance,* and *Mortal Kombat.* Dredd faces *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers, Free Willy 2,* and *Caspar.* No contest, really.

Talking of Batman: licensing deals to go with the release of the movie include 4 original Batman novels, a Catwoman novel, plus *The Making of Batman Forever*. Kenner will release various figures; Revell-Monogram will produce kits of vehicles; Topps have the sweetie rights, with lollipops top of the range; Graphitti Designs will be doing the T-Shirts, sweatshirts and other items of clothing; JDI Industries have caps, bags, etc; Mello Smello (!) release temporary tattoos and stickers; and One-Stop Publishing have rights to posters, key chains and buttons. Start saving now.

The Golden Globes, usually a good indicator of Oscar success, went mostly to *Forrest Gump* (Best Film (drama), Best Director, Best Actor) and *The Lion King* (Best Film (comedy or musical), Best Original Score, Best Song). Quentin Tarantino won Best Screenplay for *Pulp Fiction*.

ANIME

News: Anime Projects provisional line-up for the Spring includes **Oh My Goddess! 2: Midsummer Night's Dream, Bubblegum Crisis 2: Born to Kill** (dub) and **Urusei Yatsura TV Series 5**, all released April 24, plus **Oh My Goddess! 3: Burning Hearts on the Road** and **Bubblegum Crisis 3: Blow Up** (dub) released May 30.

Western Connection's February releases are **Devil Hunter Yoko Part II, Salamander 2** and **Ushiro & Tora Vol 2.**

Kiseki releases for February 20 include **Adventure Duo Episode 2** and **Urotsukidoji III: The Return of the Overfiend Episode 3**, both subtitled.

Devil-Hunter Yoko Part 1. *Dir* Katsuhira Yamada (1990). Yoko is a Japanese teenager coping with the usual problems: a crush on a gorgeous guy who doesn't notice, another guy with a crush on her that she doesn't want to notice, a beautiful

prefect who's looks she envies, and a mother and grandmother who are always fighting. Except this being an anime, Granny is really a ninja demon hunter. Yoko is to be her successor and she has to fight off possessed classmates and monsters to rescue her beloved from the clutches of the prefect who is, wait for it, really a demon. A slightly racy, fantasy comedy that is entertaining viewing, though as with all four of Western's latest releases, the subtitles seem to lag behind the dialogue a bit. 45m. Western Connection WEST 024. Cert 18.

Lupin III: The Fuma Conspiracy. *Dir* Masayuki Ozeki (1987). The first of Western Connection's releases on the

anime gentleman-thief who comes over as a cross between James Bond and Raffles. This sees Lupin attending the marriage of his samurai sidekick, Goeman, only for the bride to be kidnapped by the ninja Fuma clan in order to gain an antique urn guarded by her family and said to hold the key to a fantastic treasure. Lupin and his gang immediately set off in hot pursuit of the girl and the treasure. Inspector Zenigata of Interpol sets off in hot pursuit of Lupin, and the action begins in earnest, with battles, slapstick car chases through temples and treasure hunting through booby trapped tunnels that would make Indiana Jones wet himself. Highly

recommended. 73m. Western Connection WEST 027. Cert 18.

Salamander 1. *Dir* Hisayuki Toriumi (1989). First episode of an

VIDEO

BBC Video's latest **Dr Who** releases are the 1975 Tom Baker series **The Android Invasion**, and **Carnival of Monsters**, a 1973 Jon Pertwee adventure, both released on March 6, priced £11.99.

Speed (1994). *Dir* Jan De Bont. One of the major hits of 1994, De Bont's helter-skelter action debut thrust Keanu Reeves into the stratosphere in terms of fan status, shaking loose the 'Bill & Ted' image that has stuck like glue to him despite some radically good performances; for those of us predicting action-stardom since *Point Break*, Reeves carries off the role of Jack Traven in unrelenting, almost unemotional style, but style nonetheless. The plot...do you need this?...has Dennis Hopper as a mad bomber who develops a grudge against our Jack when his *Die Hard*-in-a-lift scenario strikes out. He plants a bomb on a bus, to ignite if the bus drops below 50mph. Sandra Bullock takes over the wheel when the driver is shot. Pop quiz: what would you do? 111m. Fox 8638. Cert 15. Rental from March 27.

animated space opera series with a hint of fantasy thrown in. A parasitic life form called the Bacterian is spreading across the galaxy in the form of a black cloud, infecting planets and turning them into living organisms, while destroying life already there. Three fighter pilots from the planet Gladius are attempting to find a way to defeat Bacterian with the help of a mysterious woman called Pola who seems to know more about bacterian than anyone. A decent enough *anime*, though not quite as absorbing as Western's other recent releases, with some nice chara designs by Haruhiko (*Macross, Gunbuster*) Mikimoto. 60m. Western Connection WEST 026. Cert PG.

Urusei Yatsura - TV Series 3. *Dir* Oshii Mamoru (1981). More bizarre humour, Takahashi style, with the world's most lecherous teenager vs. his alien, lightning hurling beloved. This volume has two double TV episodes and two full-length episodes starting with the introduction of Princess Kurama, princess of a crow-like alien race who select Ataru and then have to turn him into a suitable candidate for mating. A christmas episode has Lum's storm troopers trying to split the 'happy' couple; the entire cast sends up a traditional legend of a demon-slayer, and the final two sees Sakura's boyfriend involved in a disastrous magic duel with Cherry, while Princess Kurama tries again to improve Ataru, with her father's help. 100m. Anime Projects AP094-011. Cert 12.

Urusei Yatsura - TV Series 4. *Dir* Oshii Mamoru (1981). More crazy characters are added to an already loopy cast, starting with Mendou, the handsome son of a billionaire who promptly begins competing with Ataru for Lum. Another is Benten, a gorgeous young goddess from the rival race of Lum's people, their annual End-of-Winter grudge battle being mined by a lust-crazed Ataru (of course). And finally, the arrival of an ultra-strict teacher is big trouble for Ataru, until he discovers the teacher has a weakness. 100m. Anime Projects AP094-012. Cert PG.

Ushio and Tora Vol.1. *Dir* Kunihiko Yuyama (1993). Has been described as 'Calvin and Hobbes on acid', though I think it's closer to a psychotic *Tenchi Muyo*: a young boy, cleaning out the family shrine, discovers that the legend of a tiger-like demon, imprisoned deep within with a magic spear through its shoulder, is only too true; he's less than inclined to set it free, knowing that the demon will immediately start preying on humankind again (because the stupid creature told him!). However, when more demons materialise, Ushio has no choice but to release the demon, Tora, and using the Spear of Beasts to control him, sometimes very forcefully, forms a very tenuous demon hunting partnership that is both serious and hilarious by turns. 60m. Western Connection WEST 025. Cert PG.

ANIMATION

One of the biggest bits of film news in 1994 was the announcement of a studio created by a trio of top players in the industry, Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen; they've now unveiled their name, DreamWorks SKG, and signed a seven year joint-venture deal with Capital Cities/ABC. But on interest to animation fans is the fact that they're signing up many of Hollywood's top animators, with three top Disney names reportedly agreeing to join. Rumoured first project is an epic animated retelling of *The Ten Commandments*; the folktale *The Three Musicians of Breman* is also rumoured to be in the pipeline.

John Halas, the co-owner of Halas & Batchelor, one of Britain's few animation studios and creators of the 1954 animated feature film *Animal Farm*, died in London on January 20. Born Janos Halasz in Budapest on April 16, 1912, most of his early cartoons were published in French magazines before Halasz returned to Budapest to work with George Pal. He moved to England in 1936 to join British Animated Films, where he met Joy Batchelor whom he married in 1940. He worked mostly in advertising and educational animation, but also made the live-action *The Monster of Highgate Ponds* (1961). He made his last feature in 1977, but remained at the forefront of animation, making *Dilemma* in 1981, one of the earliest fully-digitised computer-animated films. [*Information from Denis Gifford's obituary in The Independent, January 25*]

AUDIO

The Amazing Spider-Man. Running to 210 minutes, Dirk Maggs' adaptation of the origin of Spider-Man is currently running on the Mark Goodier show until March 17. But you can get the full story on tape or CD from BBC Enterprises (ZBBC 1717) from March 6, priced £7.99 and £11.99 respectively. With a soundtrack by Brian May and an all-star cast of audio actors, the story of Peter Parker is entwined with the arrival of other costumed heroes, the Fantastic Four, and a variety of super-villains. Played for action and laughs, with a solid story as a backdrop, this is certainly Maggs' best production to date.

INTERNET

The European Cartoon Arts Network (CartooNet) recently went on-line on the World-Wide-Web at http://www.pavilion.co.uk/cartoonet. Set up by Sussex-based Pavilion Internet plc, the Network aims to build links between cartoon organisations, museums, galleries and centres as well as individual cartoonists throughout Europe, raising the profile of European cartoon art, strip illustration and graphic novels against the huge wave of imports from America and Japan. Project Co-ordinator, David Booth, told us: "The European Cartoon Arts Network now has eleven European partners including four national centres. The Internet offers a significant new distribution medium as well as a method of linking cartoonists and cartoon organisations across Europe."

The 11 partners include The Federation of European Cartoonists' Organisations (FECO), the Cartoon Art Trust (London), Cartoon County (Brighton), Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinee (Brussels), Centre National de la Bande Dessinee et de L'Image (Angouleme, France), Fanny - The Directory of Women Comic Strip Writers, Artists and Cartoonists (London), University of Kent, Centre for the Study of Cartoons and Caricature (Kent), The Yellow Press Group (Ireland), Salon International de la Bande Dessinee (Angouleme, France), University of Central England, Department of Visual Communication (UK), Wilhelm-Busch-Museum, Deutches Museum fur Karikatur und kritiche Grafik (Hannover, Germany).

TRADING CARDS

Comic Images will be launching **Bone Series II** trading cards in mid-April. The 90 all-chromium set follows one of 1994's best-selling card series, adding another 90 images, these taken from issues 11-18 and coloured by cover colourist David Reed. **The Phantom** is also on the receiving end of a card set, mixing archival art dating back to 1936 when the strip debuted, to the latest Marvel Comics version.

COMPETITION TIME!

In part two of our fantastic Pioneer Video giveaway we've got the ultimate prize: an animation cel from the best-selling Tenchi Muyo OAV. And to win this unique prize all you have to do is answer one easy question:

What is the name of the Demon released by Tenchi Masaki in Tenchi Muyo?

Send you answers on a postcard to Tenchi Muyo Competition, Comic World, Castle House, 97 High Street, Colchester CO1 1TH.
Get your answers in before Friday 17th March. Usual rules apply.

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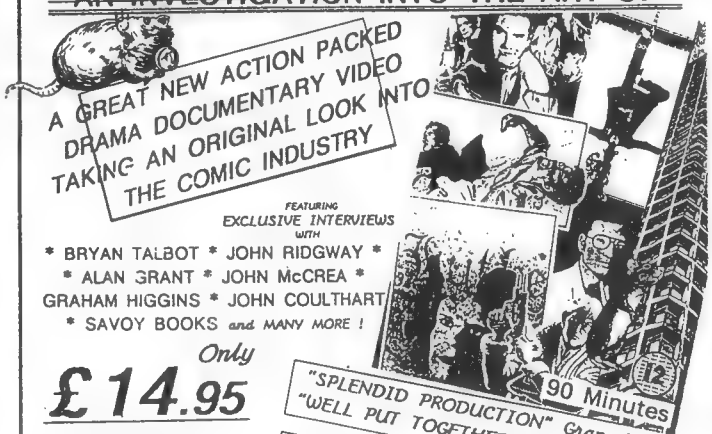

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18 Feb **Hull**. Valiant House Hotel, Anlaby Road.
18-19 Feb **AYL-CON II: DR WHO CONVENTION**. Birmingham. Tichets £28 for full weekend. Further information, SAE to AYL-CON, PO Box 85, Amerhamsham, Bucks. HP7 9QZ
19 Feb **London**. Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, WC1.
25 Feb **Brighton**. Brighton Centre, Kings Road (seafront).
25 Feb **Coventry**. University Student Union Building, Priory Street.
25 Feb **Glasgow**. Mitchell Theatre, Granville Street. Mart & collectables auction. Guests: Alan Grant, Grant Morrison.
25 Feb **Leeds**. Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way.
25 Feb **London**. Central Club Hotel, 16-22 Great Russell Street, WC1. Special guests: Nicholas Courtney, Elizabeth Sladen, Dave Prowse.
4 Mar Birmingham. Carrs Lane Church Centre.
4-5 Mar **KONMOREX KLINGON.** Hobbit Inn, Halifax. Trek con with a bias towards Klingons. Further information: Jo A. Boddy, Something Else, PO Box 16, Consett, Co Durham DH8 8YZ. Telephone: 0207 592 211
5 Mar **Stevenage**. Leisure Centre, Lytton Way.
10-12 Mar **THE NEUTRAL ZONE**. The Fortee Crest Hotel, Newcastle. Special Guests: Bjo Trimble, Richardd Arnold, Ron B. Moore, Robert Llewellyn (tbc). Further information: SAE to The Neutral Zone, 15 Annandale, Darlington, Co Durham DL1 3QX.
11 Mar **Bristol**. New Trinity Community Centre, Trinity Road, St. Philips.
11 Mar **Cambridge**. The Guildhall, Wheeler Street.
11 Mar **Liverpool**. Bluecoat Concert Hall, School Lane.
12 Mar **London**. Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, WC1.
18 Mar **Manchester**. Sachas Hotel, Tibb Street, Picadilly.
18-19 Mar **GLASGOW COMIC ART CONVENTION**. Clyde Hall, Clyde Street, G2. Special Guest: Mike Allred. Entrance fees: 1 day: £7.50, both days: £10.00. Deadline for advance bookings: March 3. Further information: SAE to Rusty Staples, PO Box 146, Glasgow G1 5RN.

Beyond Uhura

CONTINUED

than just the one character: outside of her work in television, film, on stage, doing publicity, or even writing her autobiography...and then there's the day-to-day, getting-on-with-your-life stuff...

"I'm in the throes of restoring my house due to the earthquake a year ago; washing it and extending it and remodelling it and doing it upstairs and I bought the house next door so I can sit by and watch it! Let me see; I have wonderful friends, but I don't even know how to spell relaxation! No sooner did I turn in the manuscript for Beyond Uhura then I was busy on my next book which is Saturn's Child which will be a series of the adventures of Saturna and I'm in the throes of finishing that up right now! And rewrites, and rewrites and rewrites!

"I've always written, and I've always thought where are the science fiction characters of colour? Saturna appeared to me in my dreams one night and I knew she had to be written about. I mentioned it really while I was wrapping up negotiations for Beyond Uhura with Putnam and they said 'I want it!' So I literally signed for two books at once! I said 'But you will let me get Beyond Uhura out first, won't you?' They said 'Yes, yes, yes, but get right on it. So I have been and I never stop. I don't know what relaxation means.

"Saturna is the first young woman of colour born on Titan and her mother is from Earth and her father is from another planet and thereby hangs the tale. And she's quite an exciting beauty. It's a high adventure...she does all the things I would have written for myself or for Uhura. And beyond, and beyond and beyond!"

Because of a quirk of American TV and the amount of advertising, episodes of Trek have been mostly shown in an edited form, which we've not suffered. Poor Uhura suffered the axe in many of her scenes, but had far more presence in the movies. Nichelle's favourites have been..."2, 4 and 6. The even numbers. I've always said they should skip 7 and move directly on to 8, since they're the most popular ones and the most lucrative! But all in all, I'm quite content with having done six major motion pictures."

Six because the seventh, Generations, failed to use the last opportunity to get the original crew back together for one last time. "That was originally their intention," says Nichelle, "But then they lost their nerve and didn't. I think it was a mistake but it's not for me to say."

If the decision seems weird to fans, it's no weirder to some of the missing cast: "That's what everyone says." Thankfully there are plenty of alternatives where Nichelle is concerned...including writing a Trek novel. But that's beyond even this interview. CW

Letters

The following letter is Fleetway's official response to the feature by David Lloyd which you'll find earlier this issue

Gil Page, *Fleetway Editions Ltd., London*
The return of artwork and subsequent possible resale, from the publisher's point of view, is a comparative minefield if not handled with care.

But it is certainly not true to say that "the work of John Ridgway was given to the 'Valentines' because (he) did not pick up (his) artwork".

At the request of a leading and respected agent in the business, a package of artwork was sent to the 'Valentines' in Northumbria and *one page* from *2000AD* drawn by John was inadvertently included. Our error.

This subsequently ended up in the hands of a dealer and John saw it advertised for sale in *2000AD*.

This was brought to my notice and I spoke to him at considerable length. As a result of this, we took immediate steps to prevent such a reoccurrence and the correspondence is here on file at Fleetway.

The essence of my letter to Bill 'Valentine', following a phone call, stated that Fleetway cannot supply artwork to any third party without written permission for it to be sold, so that the proceeds can either be passed on to the artist, or a proportion donated to charity.

The outcome, again on file here, was that John Ridgway had the page in question returned to him within a short space of time.

With that one exception, any dealings with the 'Valentines' by Fleetway have been conducted with the full and open knowledge of any artists and/or their representatives concerned, and I utterly refute that Fleetway Editions are "conniving in theft".

The company will formally defend that accusation if necessary.

Although the majority of artwork commissioned by Fleetway Editions Limited is our copyright and cannot be republished without permission, Fleetway can assure artists that we will do all in our power to prevent it falling into unauthorised hands, which has been the cause of so many problems in the past.

Fleetway Editions buy many thousands of pages of art from valued creators each year, and we are by far the leading commissioner of artwork in the UK and Europe. As is well known, it is also our policy to return that artwork unless otherwise agreed.

We are very conscious of our obligations.

Soon after receiving this letter I had the opportunity to see Gil Page at Fleetway and to inspect Fleetway's art store and subsequent of the above correspondence, Fleetway have now agreed to return outstanding artwork at their own cost. With thousands of pages still uncollected this may take some time, but we're pleased to note that over 31 kilos of artwork was mailed out that day alone.

Dennis Etchison, *Los Angeles*
Dear Steve,
Thanks very much for the copy of *Comic World* I really appreciate the coverage and am delighted that you thought I might be of interest to your readers.

Nick Robinson tells me that *Shadowman* is selling well, so I owe it all to people like you. It means a lot to me as my American publishers over the years have never expended any effort on my behalf to promote my books.

I must admit I was baffled by the line, attributed to me, that the book is really about "suicide by magic mushrooms." The book is not about suicide in any form, and besides magic mushrooms are non-toxic, unless you were to eat several pounds in an hour. I remember using the word 'psilocybin', an active ingredient in such mushrooms. My next thought was that this should be corrected in your next issue. Then I thought, Maybe I should keep my mouth shut, since such mushrooms are illegal...

For the record, Dennis was neither condemning or promoting drug taking. Also for the record, Shadowman's a great book and you should look out for it, and Dennis' next offering, California Gothic.

Reubs Wilmott, *Ipswich*
Dear Steve,
The new look had me foxed for a moment when I found a copy yesterday. Limiting the number of colours on the text is a move in the right direction as previously the covers have tended to look a multi-coloured mess. The 'rat' cover *[#32]* was very successful.

Just one of many letters praising the new look; we thought long and hard on what to do to sharpen up the look of the magazine, both inside and out. It seems to have worked.

Peter Hodgson, *South Humberside*
Dear Steve,
I'm writing to say how good the 'Who's Who in British Comics' section is. Could you let me know when the following will appear?... *[a lengthy list then follows].*

Sorry, but the 'Who's Who' is a vast project, and I can't guess when individual artists and writers will be appearing. But Peter's letter highlights a problem worth mentioning: I don't own or have access to every comic ever published in the UK, and any collectors are invited to get in touch if they feel they can help out.

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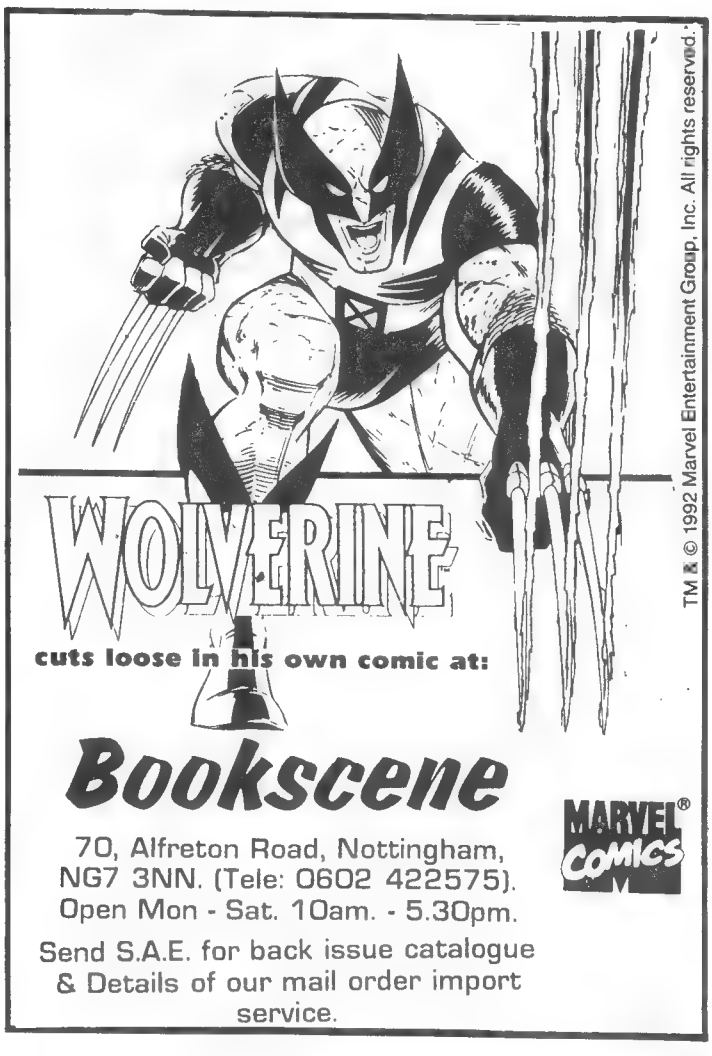
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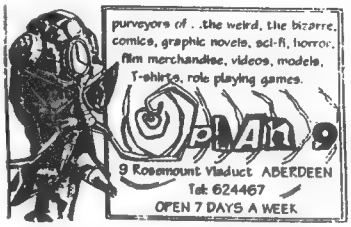
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Retail Spotlight Know Where?

PETER HOWARD REVEALS A LITTLE ABOUT HIMSELF AND NOWHERE COMICS

When Nowhere Comics first opened back in 1992 (doesn't time fly...) one of my staff announced his intention, in the spirit of the time, to change his name, by deed poll, to Bat Man.

Word got around. Within a crazy and frenetic 72 hours both Bat (to be) and I were interviewed first locally by the *Walsall Advertiser*, then the *Birmingham Evening Mail*. He was mentioned in the Nationals, *The Sun*, *The Mirror* and *The Sport* and we appeared - starred even! - in a 5 minute spot on *Midlands Today*, the Midlands half-six BBC regional news programme, in the 'Drop the Dead Donkey' slot. Bat even got to wear a Bat-suit, though it was more Russ Abbott than Michael Keaton. We were interviewed on local radio (Britt Eklund was the 'celeb' directly after us) and, for some reason still as yet undetermined reason, by an Irish radio station.

Know what? It was fun. The whole media experience. Our fifteen minutes of fame. So what if we didn't appear on *The Big Breakfast* as promised. Or *That's Life* (I'd have paid to have seen Bat Man say "sausages" on the Beeb). We had FUN.

Pete Howard and Frank the Dog with a customer

And that's the whole point of Nowhere Comics. Yes, it's a business. Doing quite well too, thank you. And yes, we take it very seriously. The most important thing for us is to know our customers. We probably know 75% of them by first name. We have over 200 standing order customers and we'll happily make a brew for most of them, buy a beer for some, even a cake (if you're lucky). Not only is being friendly and sociable good for business, it's good for us too.

Why's that so important? Well, when I was 12, maybe 13, the owner of one of the largest comic shops in the Midlands - a shop which I'd frequented almost religiously on a daily basis since it's inception - tore a strip off me. A right roasting, in fact, in front of my friends. My misdemeanour? Being shorter back in those days than I am now (although I had considerably more hair in those relatively stress-free days; have you noticed how balding most comic shop owners are on average? Almost as ba(l)d as hairdressers...) I'd leant over some back issues while reaching for some further back in the run. I felt embarrassed - my friends laughed at my chastisement - a little angry, but moreso, I felt let down: I'd been told off in my comic shop...probably my favourite place in the world back then, a place I'd fully dreamed of maybe owning one day when I'd grown up. Of course, like most of us, I'd longed to be an artist at Marvel, and later, when I realised I'd never be good enough to ever hope to 'draw comics the Marvel way', a writer. But owning my own comic shop, well, that would probably be a lot of fun too!

It's sometimes strange then to now own a comic shop. One dream at least has come true (I'm still holding out for the writer's job). Knowing full well that there are kids - some considerably older than others - who regard Nowhere in the same way I did the shop I was earlier so Nostalgic about. Nowhere is, in some ways, as much theirs as mine. Clearly without the two sides of the equation, there'd be no sum, and Nowhere would be...nowhere.

Bat and I took part in a charity egg 'n' spoon race at the local school not so long ago. In costume. So did half a dozen customers. It was fun, and as a result the school agreed to print the shop fanzine - *Now Here* - at a very competitive rate.

Now, I'm not getting sentimental, schmaltzy or American on you. It's just...I really love my job and my shop. Obviously things happen at times that are a real pain in the backside, like when you get a rates bill that seems a tad excessive, or when titles are solicited and advertised a little, shall we say, creatively (Marvel are particularly guilty of this. *Marvels: Portrait of a Universe*, for example, was listed as being in the same style of *Marvels*..."Everyone who bought *Marvels* would want (it)". Well, no...I'm sorry, but it's more like one of those cheap looking books that reprint trading cards at comic size. But I digress...).

I love designing the shop adverts and flyers and we change the whole style regularly - compare our advert this issue to the one we used before with the now famous 'Nowhere Cows'. And I love the fact that I actually got a job where I can take my dog, Frank, in every day if I wish. In fact, she now insists...

Or...

The comics business has become very cynical over the last 10 years or so. Like most Entertainment Industries it's become less entertaining, more industry. Just a there are more CDs, videos, books and computer games all of increasingly variable (maybe decreasing) quality and backed with more aggressive and sophisticated marketing campaigns competing for our pound, so too with comics. Product is the byword, quantity before quality, copyright ever more important. Ask Rob Liefeld as he traces yet another Marvel character. Warsabretoothwolf? And society gets more cynical as diversity accelerates into absurdity. That's why it's important to remember why we read comics in the first place. They were fun then, when we were kids...And we're still all kids underneath it all, right?

Maybe it's because I'm relatively young to own a shop - I was 28 last Christmas Eve - and it's easier to get on with the customers because of the relatively smaller age gap. But I feel this sense of belonging, of community, is vital to our success. If you've the money, it's easy to open a shop. But it's hard to stay open. Three deceased shops in Birmingham alone in the last 6 month testify to this. I never realised how cut-throat business could be until we began Nowhere: you need as many people in your corner as you can manage. That's why my dad, my fiancee and my best friend all work there. Oh, and my dog!

Last week, one of our best customers, inspired perhaps by Bat Man's precedent, announced that he was going to change his name, by deed poll, to Spider Man. Within 72 hours he made the front page of the *Walsall Advertiser*, the front page - photographed in costume precariously perched on a children's playgrounds' Spiders Web of all things - of the *Birmingham Express and Star*, was interviewed on Radio One. Another fifteen minutes of fame.

What goes around comes around.

Know what? Its been fun...and maybe there'll be another name change in the next four years.

Judge Dredd, anyone?

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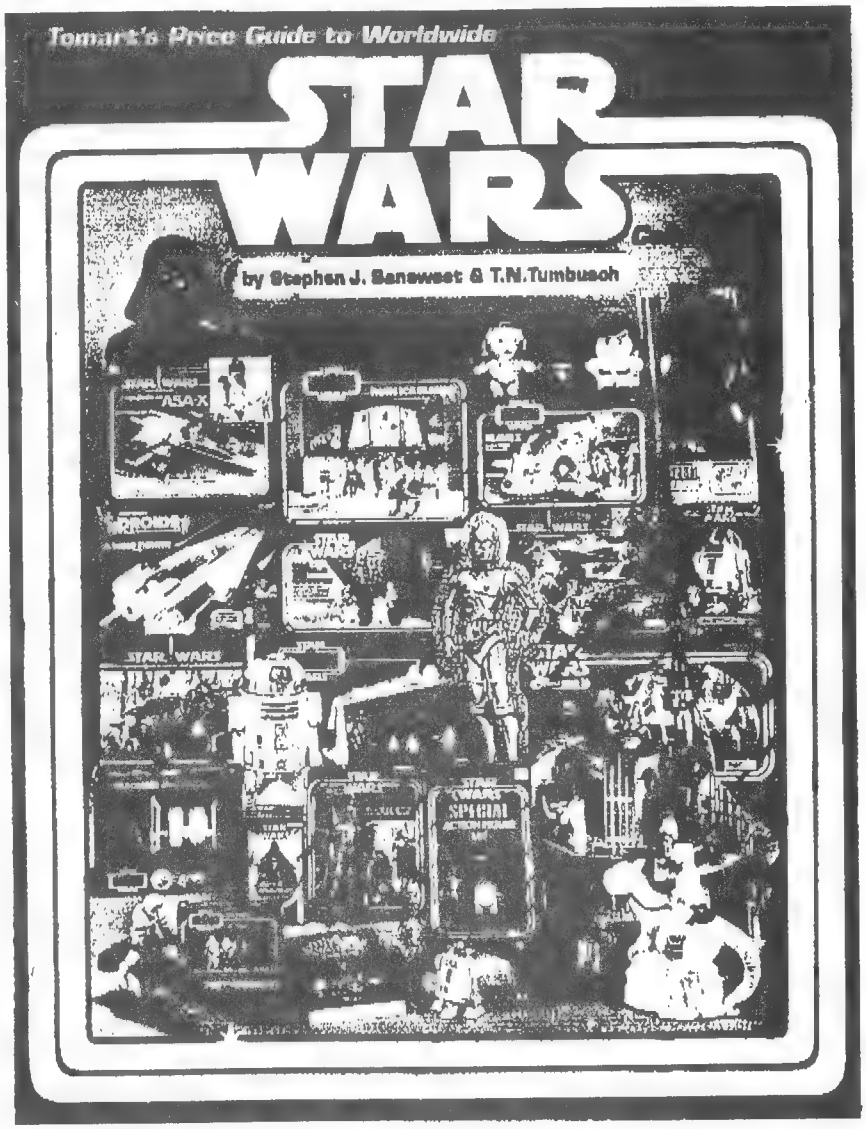

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ABBREVIATIONS

THIS IS A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS YOU MAY FIND IN THE CLASSIFIEDS & LISTING SECTIONS

M.	Mint Perfect
N.M.	Nearly Mint
V.F./V.F.N.	Very Fine
F.N.	Fine
V.G.	Very Good
G.	Good
F.	Fair
P.	Poor
B.S.	Bookshop Stamp on Cover
T.S.	Taped Spine
R.S.	Rolled Spine
M.C.	Marked Cover
W.B.	Water Bent
P.S.	Price Stamp

FOR SALE

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• **WANTED BRITISH** original artwork by Bellamy, Lawrence, Noble, Burns (Countdown), Turner (Daleks), Lindfield (Dr Who/Star Trek from Countdown/Joe 90), Haylock Land of the Giants, UFO and Dr Who from Joe 90 (Countdown), Neal Adams artwork also wanted. Telephone: 081-301 4023. (3)

• **AMERICAN COMICS** wanted, absolutely anything considered – whatever the size, age or content of your collection. I have plenty of funds to spend and will travel anywhere – excellent prices paid for high grade Silver Age and 1950s comics. I also buy in bulk, and need recent comics, e.g. Vertigo, Park. Horse, Image as well. Send lists to Andrew Colman, 67 St John's Wood High Street, London NW8 7NL or phone 0171-431 7484 with your details. Am also selling 10,000 comics in stock, call for catalogue – wide selection available at low prices. (3)

• **WANTED: CEREBUS** 27, 31, 38, 40, 44, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 69, 72, 73, 74, 75, 82, 83, 87, 88, 91, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111. Yummy Fur: 13, 14, 17. Lady Death, Madman, Slab of Concrete Magazines, Zum Magazines, Dark Knight 1 reprint, TMNT 8, Stray Toasters, 2, 4. Sandman 64, Akira 32, 34. Contact: Chris Flynn, 22 Folly Lane, Stroud, Glos GL5 7SD. (3)

• **COLLECTOR NEEDS** space – FF 21(G) £10; 22 (Fr £5; 71 (G) £2; 91 (Fr) 50p or lot £16. Also 150 FF all different NM lot £50; 78 Iron Man all different NM £24 the lot, may split. Call Pete on (0243) 375888. (1)

• **WANTED STARLORD** issue 15 cover date 19 August 1978 (companion comic to 2000AD) to complete my collection, also wanted all Tornado issues. Tel: Mr Dorian Harris on (0203) 413214 weekdays after 7pm, weekends after 11am. (12)

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MISCELLANEOUS

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• **FILL YOUR** bedroom with naked young girls! Get your 'Olivia' and other spicey cards from the country's top trade card dealers at the Memorabilia '95 events at NEC on 6th & 7th May and Glasgow on 27th May. (3)

• **LUCKY BASTARDS!** Bloody students and unemployed wasters get into Memorabilia '95 for only £2 at the NEC event and £1.50 at the Glasgow event, on production of their Matric Card or UB40. (3)

• **JUDGE DREDD** The New Judge Dredd phonecards will be launched at the NEC Memorabilia '95 event on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th of May. Details on the new Star Wars series of cards will also be being released. Memorabilia '95 is Europe's biggest ever collectors event – don't miss it.

• **THE NEC** Memorabilia '95 'Gold Priority Entry Card' is now available. This is a ticket which enables entry to the Memorabilia '95 event on 6th and 7th May from 8am onwards on both days. This is a must for any serious collectors as it will enable them to pick up the bargains that are usually grabbed by dealers before the doors open to events. The 'Gold Ticket' will also mean no more waiting in queues for hours before events. Tickets are priced at £10 and admits one adult entry to both days events and also to the Glasgow Memorabilia '95 event on Saturday 27th May. Tickets are available now are available by sending a cheque/postal order made payable to Made in Heaven, 216 Kristiansand Way, Letchworth, Herts SG6 1TU. (3)

• **COMIC AUCTION** Strictly Comics will be holding a massive Comic Auction featuring Golden/Silver Age and Contemporary Comics at the Memorabilia '95 events at Birmingham NEC on 6th and 7th May. For further information, contact Dave on 0181-447 1855 or send a SAE to Strictly Comics Auctions, 20A Plantagenet Road, New Barnet, Herts EN5 5JG. (3)

• **2000AD WEEKLY** issues 1 to 451 with the odd few missing in the later numbers, also other 70s, 80s comics, 60s, 70s 80s annuals etc. Need to dispose of ASAP, any sensible offer considered. Call for details evenings only (0252) 622829. (12)

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Study the listing carefully, then grab that phone or lick that stamp!! We carry a huge stock of 1970's, 80's Comics, and a smaller selection of Silver Age material – so give us a try!! *Send a wants list with a SAE.*

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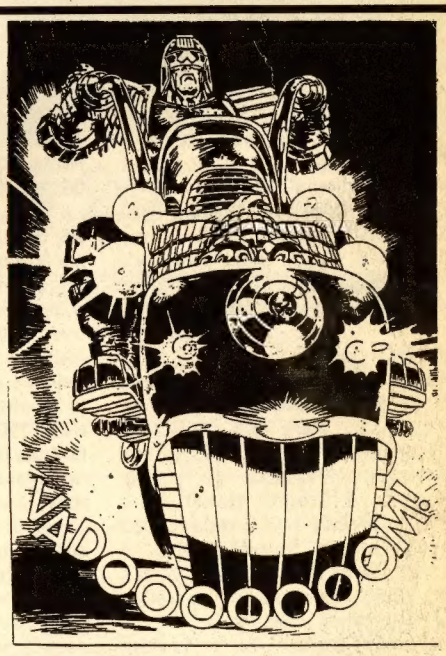

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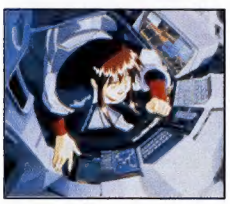

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